

Jeremiah's Field: Israel and the Rise of 'Christian' Antisemitism

by Jeremy James



We are witnessing today a remarkable polarization within the professing Church.

On one hand we have the majority, who want a more inclusive form of Christianity and a more flexible way of interpreting the Bible, and on the other an ever-shrinking group that wants to stick as closely as possible to the traditional meaning of God's Word.

We can test the difference between these two positions in several ways – for example by reference to their opinions on sexual morality, traditional marriage, interfaith worship, or popular culture. But there is one test that seems to stand out from all the rest, a test so sensitive and so controversial that many Christians would prefer to avoid it entirely.

Thirty years ago the majority of born-again Christians supported the nation of Israel. They believed in her prophetic destiny and in her right to exist. But not anymore. Today such people are in the minority. In fact, there is a noticeable correlation between the ever-shrinking group of Christians who support Israel and the ever-shrinking group who want to stick as closely as possible to the traditional meaning of God's Word.

That's the test.

PART ONE

What is God's Will for Israel?

The test we have identified goes straight to the heart of our Christian faith. A strongly divergent response by Christians to a particular issue – such as the status of Israel – is a sure sign that it has an active supernatural dimension. Since the forces of darkness work consistently in opposition to God's will, an issue of this kind will very likely divide believers into two camps, one of which is resisting, perhaps unwittingly, the will of God.

We must therefore examine this sensitive benchmark question: What *is* God's will for Israel?

Let's set aside for a moment the question of whether or not Replacement Theology – which teaches that the church has replaced Israel – is Biblically tenable, and consider instead the actual passages in Scripture that illuminate the relationship between God and the Jewish people. Unless we know the status of that relationship, we cannot possibly know the LORD's will for Israel. Even an ardent supporter of Replacement Theology must acknowledge this.

Today we identify *Israel* with the land of Israel, and the Jewish people with the worldwide population of Jews, some of whom live in Israel. But such a distinction is not Biblical. It is based, not on "God's point of view," but on standard secular concepts that normally serve us well in human relations. However, if we examine the Old Testament closely, we will find that God does not make that kind of distinction. As a nation or ethnic group, the Jewish people are always addressed by God in one of two ways, either by reference to their obedience to His holy will, which was rewarded by secure occupancy and enjoyment of the land, or by reference to their disobedience, which was punished by exile from the land and loss of the benefits that they enjoyed as its inhabitants.

In short, God has always dealt with the Jewish people by reference to their inheritance, ownership, inhabitation, and enjoyment of the land.

The principle historical subject of the Bible is the nation-state of Israel, an ethnic group based in a designated geographical location. Indeed, the way this was inaugurated was clearly designed by God to make an indelible impression on the Jews themselves. The manner in which 70 people (Jacob and his family) were 'planted' in Egypt and then 'harvested' about four hundred years later, with nearly two million souls being liberated by the LORD in a single day, is without parallel in history. This unique occasion was preceded by ten plagues that both highlighted and broadcast to the world the astonishing nature of what was about to happen. The Gentiles would watch as a nation was born.

The LORD then preserved them for forty years in the most inhospitable and unforgiving terrain. Food and water were provided by miraculous means and neither their clothing nor their footwear deteriorated. At the end of that period of chastening, they were led into the land of Canaan. Again the same miraculous powers were at work as the LORD destroyed their enemies, the seven tribes of Canaan. For centuries the land had been defiled by barbaric and satanic practices, including child sacrifice, witchcraft, and sexual vice. The seven tribes had refused to reform, but sank ever deeper into wickedness, to the point where the LORD elected to destroy them. The Israelites proved to be the instrument that He used for this purpose.

Many have difficulty with the fact that the LORD required the Israelites to utterly exterminate the seven tribes then resident in the land of Canaan. But they forget that He did so for their wickedness, just as He utterly exterminated the entire population of the planet in the Flood (with the exception of just eight individuals). The enemies of Christianity are keen to obliterate all references to the Flood as an actual historical, worldwide event. It speaks too loudly of God's judgment! If the LORD saw fit to exterminate 1-2 billion people (an estimate only) in just a few weeks around 2350 BC – a commonly accepted date for the Flood – we should not be surprised that He later passed a similar judgment on seven wicked tribes in the land of Canaan, amounting perhaps to 5 or 10 million people (an estimate only). Neither should we be surprised that He will judge the entire population of the world a second time, with equal severity, in the not too distant future.

The creation of the nation-state of Israel at the time of the Exodus was a sign to the **world** that God was at work, that these people had been set apart by His power and for His purpose and granted a designated parcel of land. It was not something that man of himself could either accomplish or oppose. It was literally an act of God.

To understand Israel in a Biblical context, we must recognize this fact. Nothing that has happened since, or will happen in the future, will make any sense unless we see that God Himself created the nation-state of Israel around 1450 BC.

The Satanic dimension

Another great barrier to understanding Israel in a Biblical context is a failure to recognize the fantastic resistance that Satan exerted both to prevent her creation and, thereafter, to impede her service to God. He knew that his role as prince of this world could only be challenged by the LORD's Anointed. Christ alone could unseat Satan. But before Christ could come, the LORD would first have to select a nation to represent Him, a nation whom He could prepare for the arrival of His Son. He then had to select from within that nation a tribe and, within that tribe, a family line through which His Son could enter the world.

The nation-state of Israel was created by God for a truly staggering purpose – to defeat Satan and free mankind from spiritual bondage.

At various stages in their history, Satan has tried to destroy the Jews. He even attempted to slaughter all the children of the royal family of David through the wiles of the wicked Queen Athaliah, but one child survived. He also tried to abolish the religion of Judaism through his relentless efforts to lure the Jews into idolatry, to corrupt the priesthood, to murder the prophets (as in the time of Jezebel), and, in the reign of the Syrian king, Antiochus IV, to outlaw many of the practices that were central to Judaism.

So, when we are speaking about the ultimate fate of the nation-state of Israel, we are speaking about the outcome of a long-running supernatural conflict between the will of God and the forces of Satan.

Some professing Christians believe that this conflict ended three days after Calvary and therefore the continued existence (or otherwise) of the nation-state of Israel will make no difference to God's plan of redemption for mankind. But they are wrong.

In order to deal properly with this issue we need to look more closely at the covenant that the LORD made with the Jewish people.

The Choosing of the Chosen People

The commonly held view is that God chose the Jews in order to bring Christ, the predestined seed of Abraham, into the world. Once the Messiah came, the Jewish nation had the option of either accepting him or rejecting him. After they continued in their disobedience and rejected their Messiah, the LORD built up the household of faith in the world at large, beyond the nation-state of Israel, and invited all Jews everywhere to join on exactly the same basis as Gentiles. This, it is alleged, abolished forever the special status of the Jewish nation-state, not by abrogating any agreement that the LORD had made with the Jews, but by extending it to the world at large. In a sense the earth itself became the promised land and all who came to faith in Christ, wherever they lived, were the chosen people, children of Abraham by faith in Christ.

There is certainly a compelling logic to this argument. But it has one fatal flaw – it conflicts with what God actually said. For ease of reference we will call this the 'New Jews' thesis, where the members of the church, whether ethnic Gentile or ethnic Jew, are now the divinely appointed recipients of all the promises that God made to the Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David.

Now let's consider what the LORD *actually* said about His chosen people. We need to weigh His statements carefully since they bring out aspects of His relationship with the Jews as a nation that cannot be explained by the 'New Jews' thesis:

"For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth." (Deuteronomy 7:6)

"For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth." (Deuteronomy 14:2)

We can see from these verses that their selection as a nation was unconditional and open-ended. But, if so, why did He select *this* particular nation? It is extremely important that we understand the Biblical answer to this question: He did it because it pleased Him to do so –

**"For the LORD will not forsake his people for his great name's sake:
because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people."
(1 Samuel 12:22)**

If no reason or condition is given, it is not our place to stipulate a requirement that might later cause the nation to be rejected. In fact, the verse from chapter 12 of 1 Samuel confirms that their selection was unconditional by declaring that the LORD will never forsake them **"for his great name's sake."**

Could any guarantee be greater than this?

The Word of God is telling us that the nation of Israel was chosen purely as an act of God's sovereign grace and that, having been chosen, they will never be forsaken, they will never be rejected, and they will never be replaced.

The 'New Jews' thesis conflicts with these verses since it adds a condition – the rejection of Christ by the nation of Israel – which is nowhere specified or implied in God's Holy Word. Indeed, the possibility of interpolating a condition at a later date is ruled out by the LORD's guarantee that He would stand over His choice in perpetuity **"for his great name's sake."**

Since His name endures forever, so too must any commitment sealed by His name.

The peculiar depth of this relationship is shown by the fact that God brought the nation of Israel into being specifically to serve Him, and that as His servant she would never be forgotten:

**"Remember these, O Jacob and Israel;
for thou art my servant:
I have formed thee;
thou art my servant:
O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me."
(Isaiah 44:21)**

Throughout the Bible, a name often designates something that is intrinsic to a person. This is certainly true of the many names for God, each of which reveals some aspect of His character. So when God connects the Jewish people with His name, and calls them by their name (as in the following passage), we are meant to understand that the bond between them is both personal and eternal:

**"But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob,
and he that formed thee, O Israel,
Fear not: for I have redeemed thee,
I have called thee by thy name;
thou art mine."
(Isaiah 43:1)**

These emphatic declarations – Isaiah 44:21 and 43:1 – are immensely significant and I would urge the reader to examine them carefully. The LORD's jealous possession of His chosen people could hardly be more evident. They are saying *I have created you, I have formed you, I have redeemed you, I have called you – even by the name that I gave you – and you are mine, O Israel, my servant, and I would ask that you never be afraid for I will never forget you nor forsake you.*

The LORD God is declaring His eternal and unconditional selection and possession of the children of Israel.

We need to remember also that God entered into this covenant relationship in the full and perfect knowledge of everything that Israel would subsequently do, including her rejection of the Messiah at his first coming. In fact, at the time that Isaiah wrote these verses the northern kingdom (Ephraim) had fallen so far into idolatry that it had been expelled from the land in punishment.

In doing this the LORD was chastising His son:

**"Is Ephraim my dear son?
is he a pleasant child?
for since I spake against him,
I do earnestly remember him still:
therefore my bowels are troubled for him;
I will surely have mercy upon him,
saith the LORD."
(Jeremiah 31:20)**

From the day that He called His chosen people out of Egypt and made them a nation, the LORD referred to Israel as His son:

**"And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD,
Israel is my son, even my firstborn: And I say unto thee,
Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to
let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn."
(Exodus 4:22-23)**

As a father, he loves His son dearly and watches over him with the utmost protectiveness (even in this present age when the Jewish people are under His severe judgment):

**"He found him in a desert land, and
in the waste howling wilderness;
he led him about, he instructed him,
he kept him as the apple of his eye."
(Deuteronomy 32:10)**

The nation of Israel is still His son, having lived continuously in that relationship since her foundation by God Himself.

Since the church comprises an aggregation of believers across all nations, but is not itself a nation, the 'New Jews' thesis is unable to accommodate this kind of relationship. It also falls seriously into error by requiring that the LORD disown or forget His son, even though He has plainly stated that **"thou shalt not be forgotten of me."**

The gift of Canaan to the nation of Israel

Having established that there is something unique about the relationship between God and the Jewish people, something that is not directly transferable to the church, we will now examine an aspect of this relationship that makes it even more unique.

As we have already noted, the LORD God of Israel does not make an absolute distinction between the nation of Israel and the land of Israel. When they were obedient to His holy will, they dwelt securely in the land, enjoying its bounty and its fruitfulness, but when they were disobedient – and obstinately so – they were removed temporarily from the land or made subject to a foreign power. The LORD always regulated and expressed His relationship with the children of Israel through the land of Israel.

This connection was evident from the moment the LORD selected Abraham as the father of the Jewish nation:

**"And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."
(Genesis 17:8)**

Possession of the land and acceptance by the LORD went hand in hand. And just as *they* were the LORD's possession forever, the land was *their* possession forever. This is a very powerful theological statement and cannot lightly be set aside.

The 'foreverness' of this bequest is emphasized in many places, particularly in the book of Jeremiah where the impending Babylonian invasion and their consequent eviction from the land were long prophesied. The mercy of the LORD was such that, even in that awful hour, He stressed His intention to bring them back again:

"Then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever." (Jeremiah 7:7)
[“forever and ever” (*min olam v’ad olam*)]

"...Turn ye again now every one from his evil way, and from the evil of your doings, and dwell in the land that the LORD hath given unto you and to your fathers for ever and ever: " (Jeremiah 25:5)
[“forever and ever” (*min olam v’ad olam*)]

The LORD had already told them – at their birth as a nation – that their disobedience would one day lead to this calamitous outcome. He even asked Moses to record the salient details in a Song and urge the Israelites to memorize it and teach it to their children, from generation to generation. The text of this Song – the *Song of Moses* – which is set down in chapter 32 of Deuteronomy (and sung by the saints in the Book of Revelation), gives a remarkable preview of the future of Israel, her disobedience, her punishment, and her eventual restoration to the land – for in the fullness of time the LORD **"will be merciful unto his land, and to his people."** (Deuteronomy 32:43)

His land and *His* people. Since He claims ownership of both, the covenant is secure:

**"Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my
covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham
will I remember; and I will remember the land."
(Leviticus 26:42)**

God never speaks of His covenant promises as something that He would *like* to do, depending on future contingencies or the behavior of the children of Israel, but always as something that He *will* do. Not even the Jews, through their years of disobedience, can thwart the immutable, sovereign purpose of the living God.

Their *ownership* of the land as a bequest from God was *unconditional*, but their *inhabitation* of the land was subject to their obedience and therefore *conditional*. Much theological confusion could be avoided if this simple distinction were better understood.

God Himself takes credit for bringing the Israelites to Canaan and for extirpating the heathen tribes that then occupied the land:

**"And he brought them to the border of his sanctuary, even
to this mountain, which his right hand had purchased.
He cast out the heathen also before them, and divided
them an inheritance by line, and made the tribes of
Israel to dwell in their tents."
(Psalm 78:54-55)**

In doing so, He brought them to **"this mountain"**, namely Zion or Jerusalem. He also allocated a clearly marked portion of territory to each tribe, to be retained by them in perpetuity and passed from generation to generation.

The Word of God makes it abundantly clear that the conquest of Canaan was *His* work, not that of His chosen people, and that His role in performing these mighty deeds was evident to the heathen nations in and around Canaan. For example the Philistines cried in despair when they saw the Ark of the Covenant on the field of battle:

**"Woe unto us! who shall deliver us out of the hand of these
mighty gods? these are the gods that smote the Egyptians
with all the plagues in the wilderness."
(1 Samuel 4:8)**

None could ignore the fact that "**his right hand**" had made it possible. The work was God's, not man's. Equally, when He brought the Israelites back again from their seventy years of exile in Babylon, the heathen could see that their status was that of a people "sanctified" or set apart for His holy purpose:

**"Thus saith the Lord GOD; When I shall have gathered the house of Israel from the people among whom they are scattered, and shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the heathen, then shall they dwell in their land that I have given to my servant Jacob."
(Ezekiel 28:25)**

The LORD's inheritance

From among all the nations on earth, the nation of Israel was chosen by the LORD as His portion, His sole inheritance and possession:

**"For the LORD'S portion is his people;
Jacob is the lot of his inheritance."
(Deuteronomy 32:9)**

These passages of Scripture teach us that Israel was set apart by God and designated the sole recipient of His promises. In order to partake of these promises, a foreigner would need to be sanctified or set apart in the same way. It is significant that this option was available to Gentiles even from the very foundation of Israel. A "mixed multitude" left Egypt with the Israelites at the time of the Exodus and there are many examples throughout the Bible of Gentiles being accepted or absorbed into the household of Israel.

When Moses married an Ethiopian woman, a foreigner, seemingly after the death of his Midianite wife, his sister Miriam and brother Aaron were angry with him. They would appear to have objected to his marriage to a Gentile, but he was entitled to wed the Ethiopian if she was a sincere proselyte and thus a member of the household of Israel (see Exodus 12:48**). Miriam was severely chastised by the LORD for her attitude to Moses. As punishment she had to endure temporarily the curse of leprosy and live outside the camp for a week.

**** "And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, and will keep the passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as one that is born in the land: for no uncircumcised person shall eat thereof."**

This is why Paul, in Romans, speaks of the church as a set of branches grafted on to the great tree of Israel. It is by this means that we, as born-again Christians, share in the everlasting promises that God made to Israel. As members of the 'invisible' church we are part of the body of Christ who, in his physical nature, is Jewish. We are not 'New Jews' but Gentiles grafted onto the finished work of Christ. We find salvation in exactly the same way as the Jews, through faith in the atoning work of the Jewish Messiah who was sent by the LORD God of all Creation to redeem mankind.

Moses drew the attention of the Israelites to the exclusive nature of their relationship with God when he said:

**"For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them,
as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for?"
(Deuteronomy 4:7)**

Lest any other nation presume to know the LORD, the Word declares:

**"You only have I known of all the families of the earth:
therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."
(Amos 3:2)**

It is precisely because of their unique relationship with the LORD, which brought so many privileges and blessings, that their punishment has been so severe. Nevertheless, it was – and is – a temporary chastisement and not a permanent banishment:

**"For the LORD will not cast off his people, neither
will he forsake his inheritance."
(Psalm 94:14)**

Israel today is in the same alienated state as the prodigal son in the parable told by Jesus. He never ceased to be a son, but in his arrogance and disobedience he decided to live apart from his father and squander his inheritance. The church today is represented by the son who remained loyal to his father. Alas, he is greatly annoyed to find that his reprobate brother will be allowed back into the family home and even welcomed with great delight and celebration by their father.

The father saw his reprobate son "afar off" because he had been watching out for him continually. The father never forgot his son, even though the son had for a long time forgotten his father. The father lived in daily expectation of his return. And one day Israel too, the long lost son, will return to his Father.

The professing church should be helping Israel to do this, but in the main she is opposed to her very existence. Instead of straightforward Antisemitism, we have today the somewhat disguised form known as anti-Zionism, with its endless flow of hostile propaganda. (We will examine this theme in more detail later.)

Christ told us that he had one flock but two sheepfolds (enclosures):

**"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father:
and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep
I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must
bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there
shall be one fold, and one shepherd."
(John 10:15-16)**

He confirms that at some time in the future the two assemblies will come together in one sheepfold or enclosure, and will have one shepherd, namely the Jewish god-man, Christ Jesus of Nazareth.

To deny that Israel as a nation will one day call upon and accept her Messiah is to reject the words of Christ and the prophets. Sadly, today, more and more professing Christians are basing their theology, not on the Word of God, but on the word of man – on misleading sound-bites, mischievous claims, and cunning propaganda.

The Land belongs to God

As the Word of God tells us, the children of Israel are the LORD's inheritance. However, there are passages in Scripture which reveal that the land, too, is part of that inheritance:

**"The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine;
for ye are strangers and sojourners with me."
(Leviticus 25:23)**

**"And first I will recompense their iniquity and their sin double;
because they have defiled my land, they have filled mine inheritance
with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable things."
(Jeremiah 16:18)**

We need to give careful consideration to these passages since they reveal the interconnected nature of the relationship that exists between the LORD God of Israel, the children of Israel, and the land of Canaan.

The LORD claims ownership of both the children of Israel and the land He has given them. Thus they are not the exclusive owners of the land but co-owners with God. As such they have the right to inhabit the land and enjoy its fruitfulness and its bounty, provided they are obedient to His holy will.

Since the sin of idolatry defiled the land, it could not be tolerated. His children knew this but they persisted, and in consequence suffered two terrible evictions, that of the Northern Kingdom in 722 BC and of the Southern in 586 BC.

We can see from these verses that the LORD God of Israel continues to exercise His right of ownership over the land of Canaan. He has a plan and a purpose for the land that completely supersedes any scheme or ambition of man.

Many professing Christians today are unfamiliar with these basic facts. The progressive division of God's Word into relevant, less relevant, and peripheral has meant that the full spiritual impact of these and related verses has been lost. We will see this even more clearly when we consider the role of Jerusalem in God's plan. It is enough to say at this point that the artificial segmentation of the Bible into the so-called 'Old' Testament and 'New' Testament has greatly obscured the unity of God's Word and given rise to the false perception that the last 27 books of the Bible have somehow modified or diluted the divine import of the first 39. At one level the Bible is a compendium of 66 books by some 40 authors, but in the full sense it is just one book by one author – **"Forever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven"** (Psalm 119:89)

The Land of Canaan

Before we examine the future of Israel from God's perspective – the only perspective that matters – we first need to clarify a vital piece of terminology.

We have thus far referred to the parcel of land that the LORD gave to the children of Israel as "the land of Canaan." Why? Because that is what God Himself called it on several occasions, both before and after He gave it to the children of Israel:

**"And they found among the inhabitants of Jabeshgilead
four hundred young virgins, that had known no man by
lying with any male: and they brought them unto the
camp to Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan."
(Judges 21:12)**

During the historical period to which this passage refers, the tribes of Israel had *already* been established in the land. It was now in every sense "Israel." It is also significant that the Word of God connects *the land of Canaan* with the town of Shiloh which was then the location of the Tabernacle and the national focus of Jewish worship (The same connection is also made in Joshua 21:2 and 22:9). As such it was the spiritual center of the world and the place where God dwelt among His people. *Shiloh* is also a special word since Jacob used it in his prophetic reference to the birth of Christ:

**"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver
from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him
shall the gathering of the people be."
(Genesis 49:10)**

The LORD also refers to "the land of Canaan" in a passage from Ezekiel where He chastises the Jews for their obstinate idolatry:

**"Thou hast moreover multiplied thy fornication in the land of
Canaan unto Chaldea; and yet thou wast not satisfied herewith."
(Ezekiel 16:29)**

In addition, the Bible uses another name for the land flowing with milk and honey, namely, "**the pleasant land**," which appears in Psalm 106:24, Daniel 8:9, and Zechariah 8:14. The term in Hebrew, in both the Psalm and Zechariah, is *eretz chemdah*, meaning desirable, delightful, pleasant, excellent, or precious land. In Daniel, the word 'land' is implied and the adjective *tsebiy* is used, meaning beautiful, glorious, or even graceful, like a gazelle. Zechariah also referred to it as "**the holy land**" (2:12).

Perhaps the most arresting name of all, since it connects the land with its owner, is found in Isaiah 8:8:

**"And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over,
he shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings
shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel."**

The land of Canaan is **Immanuel's Land**, the land given by the Father to His Son who, as Immanuel, will dwell among us. How puny and foolish are the claims of men when set beside this simple verse!

So why do modern Christian commentators use the word 'Palestine' when referring to the land that belongs to Immanuel, the land which the LORD God Almighty has called holy, desirable, delightful, and pleasant?

Do they not know what 'Palestine' means, that it is a deliberately insulting name imposed on the region by the Roman Emperor Hadrian after the Jewish Revolt of 132-135 AD? The Emperor decided to punish the Jews by renaming their country after their bitter enemies, the Philistines. He also renamed Jerusalem, again with a view to causing great offence, calling it *Aelia Capitolina* after the pagan god Jupiter whose principal temple stood on the Capitoline hill in Rome (The word 'Aelia' is a reference to the Emperor's family name). He even built a pagan temple in honor of Jupiter on the site of the ruins of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem.

The Covenant granting the Land of Canaan

Humanly we see events in a sequence that can only be understood by reference to their observable effects, but we cannot see beyond the present. We can never see the fullness of all things, but God speaks only from the totality of what He sees – and He sees everything!

One of the great tragedies and failings of the modern church is its sore neglect of Bible prophecy. The Word tells us about the future because God wants us to understand it. He wants us to know His plan for mankind and how it will play out. But many Christian leaders, in their pride, are working to a different plan.

Though many Christians would deny it, the neglect of Bible prophecy within the professing church is a great sin.

With the significant advances in science and technology over the past hundred years or so, it is widely believed that man now has the power that he needs to shape his own destiny and thereby avoid the troubled future depicted in the Bible. This is why most churches allegorize Bible prophecy or else convince themselves that the events foretold have already occurred. Some even sidestep Bible prophecy entirely.

The root cause of this great sin is Replacement Theology, the belief that the church has replaced Israel in God's promises.

Satan has long recognized that the destruction of Israel is predicated on the corruption of all prophecies relating to her future survival. Since he can't rip these prophecies out of the Bible, he must neutralize our ability to read what they plainly say. The obvious or natural meaning must be suppressed. And he has done this with a lie that can be encapsulated in just five short words: *the church has replaced Israel*. Once a professing Christian swallows this capsule, he is unable thereafter to see what the Word of God is telling him about Israel.

Satan has used this lie to erase Israel from the Bible in the same way that he has used ethnic hatred to erase her from Islamic maps of the Middle East.

If someone is determined to believe that Replacement Theology is correct, then so be it. As a professing Christian, however, he is faced with a deeply challenging and perplexing question: Will he be able to explain his position in Biblical terms at the *Bema*, the judgment seat of Christ?

Remember, if you are wrong about Replacement Theology, you risk a great loss at the *Bema*. The Bible could not have stated more plainly what God has planned for Israel. For example, the last three chapters of Zechariah could be published in a modern newspaper and their broad thrust would be readily understood by most readers, even non-Christians. So, if you are prepared to set aside more than a quarter of God's holy Word on the basis of a terse, five-word proposition that has no Biblical foundation, you had better be absolutely sure you are right.

The LORD's binding promise

The author of Psalm 105 was clearly seeking to soothe the aching hearts of future generations when he described the covenant of the LORD as follows:

"He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations. Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac; And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant: Saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance:" (Psalm 105:8-11)

The solemn legality of this binding testament is expressed in powerful terms – covenant, commanded, oath, confirmed, everlasting, forever, law, inheritance. The beneficiaries are named and the transfer of title boldly declared. If there is a verse in the Bible that says, *I will do this thing which I said I will do*, this is it!

Please remember that this was not an agreement between two parties but a binding, irrevocable commitment by the LORD. No conditions were specified or implied. The conditionality specified in the Mosaic law pertained only to the occupation and enjoyment of the land, not its ownership. The land could never pass from Jewish ownership. In fact, territory allotted to one tribe could not even be transferred to *another* tribe.

There are many other passages of Scripture that confirm the permanency and non-transferability of the LORD's covenant with Israel. In Jeremiah chapter 31 the LORD even describes several impossible conditions that would have to be satisfied before He could renege on His promise, thereby emphasizing through the use of hyperbole the immutability on His purpose:

"Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD." (Jeremiah 31:35-37)

The long history of Antisemitism – fomented and sustained in the west by the Roman Catholic Church and in the east by the Russian Orthodox Church – has hinged critically on the belief that one condition *did* actually apply, a condition which the LORD could not specify in advance, namely the murder of His Son by the Jews.

In making this fallacious argument, the sceptics are prepared to dismiss, not just everything that the LORD had said about the irrevocability of his promises to Israel, but the many prophetic passages which specified the wonderful transformation that He intended to effect among His chosen people, the children of Israel, in the fullness of time. These include, in particular, Ezekiel 36:

"Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God." (Ezekiel 36:22-28)

It is vital to understand that the LORD will do this in order to vindicate His Holy Name – **"for my holy name's sake"** – and not for any other reason. Despite all that Israel has done to profane His Name, He will utterly transform her in accordance with His promise. He will redeem her as a nation, as a holy priesthood, and thereby sanctify His Name before the pagan nations. His chosen people will dwell in the land that He gave them and Christ himself, the incarnate Son of God, will dwell among them.

If the LORD did not do this, then Satan would have won. Should He make even a single prophecy that does not come to pass as He foretold, then His sovereign authority will have been impugned and He has spoken falsely. Without that authority He would be unable to judge Satan and his fallen angels.

None of the remarkable prophecy in Ezekiel 36 can be applied to the church, as Rome tries to argue. What land has the LORD given the church? To which nations have born-again Christians been scattered, from which they will be regathered? Which nation of born-again Christians has profaned the LORD among the heathen? Which born-again Christians have not already been cleansed of their "filthiness" by their faith in Christ? Which born-again Christians have not been born again and given a new heart?

This prophecy pertains to the nation of Israel, the descendants of the twelve tribes who were scattered among the nations, having been expelled from the land which the LORD had given them. This is the nation which, historically, rejected her Messiah and profaned the LORD's name among the heathen. And this is the nation that the LORD will redeem for His Holy Name's sake.

PART TWO

Jerusalem, the Holy City of God

We have seen that the LORD has a special relationship with the children of Israel and that He has chosen them from among the nations for His holy purpose. They were selected entirely by the will of God and for no other reason, a sovereign decision that we can neither fathom nor question.

As we have seen, this selection pertained not only to the nation of Israel, but also to the land of Israel. The LORD marked out her territory on her behalf and gave it unconditionally to His chosen people. Furthermore, during their sojourn in the wilderness, He reminded them again and again that He would one day select a geographical location **within** the land of Israel where His Name would dwell:

**"Then there shall be a place which the LORD your God shall choose
to cause his name to dwell there; thither shall ye bring all that
I command you; your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices,
your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all
your choice vows which ye vow unto the LORD:"
(Deuteronomy 12:11)**

The Ark of the Covenant and the Altar of Burnt Offerings were stationed for long periods at different locations, including Shiloh, before the LORD made His chosen location known to David and confirmed it thereafter on several occasions:

**"In Jerusalem will I put my name."
(2 Kings 21:4)**

In the many attempts that commentators have made to usurp the future role of Israel in the plan of God, they have focused primarily on the supposed supersession of the children of Israel by the church, but in doing so they have neglected the enormous prophetic importance that the LORD has attached to the ancient city of Jerusalem. And what a subject to neglect!

The imperishable and non-transferable glory of the promises that the LORD gave to the children of Israel can be inferred, if not shown directly, from what He has revealed about His future plans for Jerusalem.

While the proponents of Replacement Theology confuse Israel with the church, to the detriment of both, they have no plausible candidate with which to confuse Jerusalem. So they must ignore all prophecies relating to Jerusalem as a geographical location, or else take them literally and purge them of all reference to Israel!

The Bible is sometimes described as a love story, where the Creator, with great patience and tender mercy, redeems the whole of fallen creation. If Christ did not love us first, we would be unable to love him. But the Bible has several other love stories. Perhaps the greatest of all is the love that the Father has for the Son and the Son for the Father. There is also the great love that God has for both Israel and the church. And then there is the special love that the LORD has for Jerusalem.

As far as I can tell, this theme has received little, if any, attention in Systematic Theology. Nonetheless, it runs like a golden thread through the entire Bible and sheds light on aspects of His plan for mankind that, I believe, would not otherwise be visible. The LORD even devotes an entire book – the Lamentations of Jeremiah – to the intense spiritual trauma that was produced in a single day in 586 BC when the armies of Nebuchadnezzar sacked Jerusalem.

It is difficult to comprehend the incredible love that God has for Israel without reflecting on the Bible through the lens of Lamentations. Its sombre and remorseful words are suffused with divine love. Most readers tend to see no further than the prophet's lament, his personal response to the horrifying desecration of his holy city, but we must remember, also, that this is **God's** Word and this is **God's** lament!

It may seem contradictory that the LORD should grieve the destruction of Jerusalem, given that He had decreed this very outcome as a punishment upon a rebellious and idolatrous people. But there is no contradiction. The Word had already revealed the distinction in Leviticus 10:6, where the LORD had just destroyed Nadab and Abihu by fire:

**"And Moses said unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar,
his sons, Uncover not your heads, neither rend your clothes;
lest ye die, and lest wrath come upon all the people:
but let your brethren, the whole house of Israel,
bewail the burning which the LORD hath kindled."
(Leviticus 10:6)**

They were to grieve, not the death of Aaron's two sons, but that the LORD should have had to inflict so terrible a punishment – **"bewail the burning which the LORD hath kindled."**

The key to understanding the long and painful history of Israel may be found in this simple sentence. The LORD must punish sin; He must punish his beloved Israel until she repents of her idolatry and rebellion. And yet it grieves Him to do so. But she *will* repent and she *will* return! The LORD has prophesied again and again that this glorious day is sure to come. Meanwhile, all true believers should **"bewail the burning which the LORD hath kindled."**

A Place Apart

Among the many names that the Bible has given to the sovereign God of all Creation are **"the God of Jerusalem"** (2 Chronicles 32:19, Ezra 7:19) and the **"LORD God of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the land of Israel"** (Ezekiel 12:19).

In only one other instance does the LORD connect His Name to a location – **"I am the God of Bethel"** (Genesis 31:13). It was at Bethel, 12 miles north of Jerusalem, that the LORD first appeared to Jacob. As Ezekiel revealed (chapters 40-48), the city of Jerusalem in the Millennium will be many times larger than it is today and will therefore embrace the location known as Bethel.

So, apart from Israel proper, Jerusalem the only location on earth to which the LORD has attached His Holy Name. It is notable that the name *Bethel* means 'The House of God', while *Jerusalem* means 'The Foundation of Peace'. Together they announce the identity and purpose of the future home on earth of the Messiah.

The connection is especially pronounced in two remarkable passages concerning the Millennial reign of Christ:

**"In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall
dwell safely: and this is the name wherewith she [Jerusalem]
shall be called, The LORD our righteousness."
(Jeremiah 33:16)**

**"It was round about eighteen thousand measures:
and the name of the city [Jerusalem] from that day shall be,
The LORD is there [YHWH Shammah]."
(Ezekiel 48:35)**

Both refer to the exaltation of Jerusalem in the Millennium, when Christ will reign in glory upon the earth and dwell in person in his holy city. That is why the book of Ezekiel ends with those wonderful words, "***YHWH Shammah***" (**The LORD is There!**)

The quotation from Jeremiah is also significant for another reason. When taken in conjunction with an earlier verse by the same prophet, it actually associates the city of Jerusalem by name with Christ himself:

**"In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he [Christ] shall be called, The LORD our righteousness."
(Jeremiah 23:6)**

It is surely a profound testimony to the status of this remarkable city that, in the Millennium, both Christ and Jerusalem will share the *same* name, ***The LORD Our Righteousness***.

The special love that God has for Jerusalem is also richly evident from the many honorific titles and names bestowed on her in His Word:

A City not Forsaken	Isaiah 62:12
A Quiet Habitation	Isaiah 33:20
Ariel ('The Lion of God' or 'The Hearth of God')	Isaiah 29:1
Beulah ('Married')	Isaiah 62:4
Crown of Glory	Isaiah 62:3
Exceedingly Beautiful	Ezekiel 16:13
Great among the Nations	Lamentations 1:1
Hephzibah ("My delight is in her")	Isaiah 62:4
Holy unto the LORD	Jeremiah 31:40
Joyous City	Isaiah 22:2
Lebanon	Zechariah 11:1
My Holy Mountain	Ezekiel 20:40
Princess among the Provinces	Lamentations 1:1
Rock of the Plain	Jeremiah 21:13
Royal Diadem	Isaiah 62:3
Salem	Psalms 76:2
Sought Out	Isaiah 62:12
Tower of the Flock	Micah 4:8
YHWH Shammah – "The Lord is There"	Ezekiel 48:35
Zion	2 Samuel 5:7

The Beauty of Israel	Lamentations 2:1
The Beloved City	Revelation 20:9
The City called by Thy Name	Daniel 9:18
The City of David	2 Samuel 5:7
The City of God	Psalms 46:4
The City of Judah	2 Chronicles 25:28
The City of Our God	Psalms 48:1
The City of Our Holy Feasts	Isaiah 33:20
The City of Rejoicing	Zephaniah 2:15
The City of Righteousness	Isaiah 1:26
The City of the Great King	Psalms 48:2
The City of the LORD	Psalms 101:8
The City of the LORD of Hosts	Psalms 48:8
The City of Truth	Zechariah 8:3
The Faithful City	Isaiah 1:26
The Gate of My People	Micah 1:9
The Glorious Holy Mountain	Daniel 11:45
The Holy City	Nehemiah 11
The Holy Mountain	Zechariah 8:3
The Holy Place of the Tabernacles of the Most High	Psalms 46:4
The House of the God of Jacob	Isaiah 2:3
The House of the LORD	Psalms 27:4
The Joy of the Whole Earth	Psalms 48:2
The LORD Our Righteousness	Jeremiah 33:16
The Mount of the Congregation	Isaiah 14:13
The Mountain of His Holiness	Psalms 48:1
The Mountain of the LORD of Hosts	Zechariah 8:3
The Mountain where God desires to Dwell	Psalms 68:16
The Perfection of Beauty	Psalms 50:2
The Place of the Name of the LORD of Hosts	Isaiah 18:7
The Stronghold of the Daughter of Zion	Micah 4:8
The Tabernacle of the Daughter of Zion	Lamentations 2:4
The Throne of the LORD	Jeremiah 3:17
The Zion of the Holy One of Israel	Isaiah 60:14

What a glorious series of epithets!

That the LORD of all Creation should speak in such terms about this ancient city is a sure indication that she occupies a very special place in His plan for mankind. We know, for example, that she has never been exalted in the earth in the manner described, nor has she come anywhere close to enjoying the dignity and stature that these majestic titles imply.

Many of the epithets speak of her royal dignity and purpose, while others declare her holiness. Her beauty in the Millennium will be unsurpassed! Collectively they portray the attributes of a city, a holy sanctuary, that the Father has chosen for His Son, a city whose divine standing will one day become fully manifest before the entire world.

This is why Satan craves Jerusalem! He wants *his* 'son', the Antichrist, to inherit the city, to take it for himself and thwart the LORD's prophetic plan for mankind. In order to propel the world toward this dark goal, he is making full use of every political, economic and religious institution under his control to convince the world that Jerusalem does *not* belong to the Jews.

As the father of lies, he is well equipped to carry out this great deception!

He is also using his formidable supernatural influence to foment wars of every kind, here and there across the Middle East, to generate the fear and chaos that are his hallmarks and thereby embolden the enemies of Israel to rise up and destroy her.

The Word of God tells us in specific terms that Satan craves Jerusalem and is determined to make her his own. His five great ambitions are set out in chapter 14 of Isaiah, including his wild demonic claim, **"I will be like the most High."** He also boasts, **"I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north."** Here he lays direct claim to Jerusalem, the mountain of God, which, as the Psalmist confirms, sits on **"the sides of the north"** -

**"Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion,
on the sides of the north, the city of the great King."
(Psalm 48:2)**

Yes, Satan boasts that he will take Jerusalem and make himself like the Most High!

In order to do this he must infiltrate the minds and hearts of the leaders of all nations and turn them against Israel. This has been happening for decades among the nations of Islam, the member states of the United Nations, the various members of the European Union, and the World Council of Churches, as well as influential secret organizations like Freemasonry. They are all working together to weaken and undermine the economic viability and military defensibility of Israel, to portray her as a pariah state and, using poisonous lies repeated *ad nauseum* in the media and elsewhere, to turn the full weight of world opinion against her.

The LORD God of Israel, who sees all things, has seen all of this from the very foundation of the world. He sums up the entire matter for our benefit in Psalm 2:

- [1] Why do the heathen rage,
and the people imagine a vain thing?
- [2] The kings of the earth set themselves,
and the rulers take counsel together,
against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying,
- [3] Let us break their bands asunder,
and cast away their cords from us.
- [4] He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh:
the Lord shall have them in derision.
- [5] Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath,
and vex them in his sore displeasure.
- [6] Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.
- [7] I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me,
Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.
- [8] Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen
for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts
of the earth for thy possession.
- [9] Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron;
thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.
- [10] Be wise now therefore, O ye kings:
be instructed, ye judges of the earth.
- [11] Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.
- [12] Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way,
when his wrath is kindled but a little.
Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

With stunning clarity the LORD in His mercy is telling us exactly what He thinks of Satan's deranged plan.

In verses 1-3 we see the massed ranks of rebellious humanity conspiring together against Israel and rejecting the LORD God of Israel and His Son, Christ Jesus of Nazareth. They regard the precepts and commandments of the Bible as cords and bands that bind them, restricting their imagined freedom.

In verses 4-5, the LORD God of Israel laughs at the heathen nations, their proud armies and their vaunted ambitions. By implication He is also laughing at Satan himself, the ultimate rebel who, despite his phenomenal supernatural power, is an utterly pathetic creature whom the LORD could squash like an insect. When the great End Time confrontation takes place – in God's time, not one chosen by man or by Satan – He will "speak" to them and "vex" them in His great anger, authorizing His Son to proceed without mercy – **"and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things"** (Psalm 45:4).

Verses 6-12 are stated in the prophetic perfect tense, as though the events described have already been accomplished.

An important verse for our purpose is verse 6 – **"Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion."** Despite all that Satan and rebellious mankind are doing to obstruct His holy will, the LORD God of Israel will send His Son, Christ Jesus of Nazareth, to reign in person in Zion. The Messiah will put down the great worldwide rebellion, subduing the heathen nations, and destroying the enemies of Israel. As verse 9 says, he will break them with a rod of iron and smash them in pieces like an earthen jar. Having accomplished this mighty task, he will rule the world thereafter from his holy mountain in Jerusalem.

One of the great mistakes that the professing church has made over the past hundred years or so, a mistake that only worsens with the passage of time, is to teach that Christ, who came the first time as a Lamb, will return as a Lamb. Indeed, the LORD *is* merciful, but for those who reject His Son, He reserves a most severe and exacting judgment. And the principal instrument through whom He will effect this judgment is Christ himself! -

**"...behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David,
hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven
seals thereof." (Revelation 5:5)**

As the Lion of Judah he will execute a terrible vengeance on all those nations that sought to annihilate Israel:

**"The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in
the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen,
he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall
wound the heads over many countries."
(Psalm 110:5-6)**

How many preachers today are reminding their flocks that, on his return, Christ Jesus of Nazareth, the Lion of Judah, will **"fill the places with the dead bodies"**, that he will carry out the will of His Father to the uttermost degree, and execute perfect judgment on His behalf?

None of the wicked shall withstand him!

The Bible tells us that, despite the vain plans which man in his arrogance has elected to make, the LORD will establish His Son upon the throne of David in Jerusalem. The assembled forces of Satan and the vast armies of man will be humiliated and destroyed, for **"The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."** (Isaiah 9:7)

We need to continually remind ourselves that the love and mercy of God cannot exist apart from His infinite holiness and justice. He is a jealous God who loves His own with an unshakeable love and will not tolerate rivals of any kind:

**"For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD,
whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:"
(Exodus 34:14)**

And He is jealous, not only for His chosen people, but for His chosen city, Jerusalem:

**"Thus saith the LORD of hosts; I am jealous for Jerusalem
and for Zion with a great jealousy."
(Zechariah 1:14)**

The LORD is a Zionist! Once His patience and longsuffering are exhausted, He will send His Son and vent His jealousy and anger with great fury upon His enemies:

**"Thus saith the LORD of hosts; I was jealous for Zion with
great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury.
Thus saith the LORD; I am returned unto Zion, and will
dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem
shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain
of the LORD of hosts the holy mountain."
(Zechariah 8:2-3)**

He has chosen her, she belongs to Him, and the massed ranks of Satan and the raving hoards of Baal will be helpless before Him -

**"For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it
for his habitation. This is my rest forever:
here will I dwell; for I have desired it."
(Psalm 132:13-14)**

As Zechariah says, in the prophetic perfect tense, **"I am returned unto Zion."** This refers to the second coming of Christ, when he returns once more to the land of Israel and chooses Jerusalem again, just as he did at his first coming:

Jerusalem was chosen by Jesus at his first coming

**"And when he was come near, he beheld the city [Jerusalem],
and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at
least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace!
but now they are hid from thine eyes...because
thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."
(Luke 19:41-44)**

Jerusalem is chosen by Jesus at his second coming

**"And the LORD shall inherit Judah his portion in
the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again."
(Zechariah 2:12)**

The allegorizers and mystifiers behind replacement theology and dominionism are deaf to these pronouncements! They simply refuse to accept that the LORD God of Israel means exactly what He says!

In the perversity of their fallen nature, men resist intensely the possibility that God will one day judge them. This prospect terrifies them, as it does Satan and his demon hoards. Thus they strive by every means possible to imagine a future where man alone is the measure of all things and is accountable only to himself, a future where – if God *does* judge man – He can do so only in accordance with man's values and standards.

The whole of the Book of Ecclesiastes is devoted to refuting this foolishness! Man **must** live as God decrees, or suffer the consequences. There is neither truth nor goodness in the human heart, not one iota, and until Christ gives each one of us a new heart, we are lost, dead in trespasses and sins, and prey to the deeply rooted wickedness of our fallen nature.

When Jesus of Nazareth reigns in person over the nation of Israel, the law will go forth from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth and all men everywhere will be subject to his rule. Jerusalem will then realize in full all of the wonderful prophecies relating to her. She will be "**The Joy of the Whole Earth**," "**The City of the Great King**" (Psalm 48:2), "**Great among the Nations**" (Lamentations 1:1), "**The Place of the Name of the LORD of Hosts**" (Isaiah 18:7), "**Crown of Glory**" (Isaiah 62:3), "**The LORD Our Righteousness**" (Jeremiah 33:16), and "**YHWH Shammah – the LORD is There**"!

Everything that the LORD has promised regarding Jerusalem will come to pass. The Holy City will truly *be* **The Holy City**! The House of the LORD will truly *be* **The House of the LORD**! The City of Truth will truly *be* **The City of Truth**!

Micah gives a wonderful description of The Holy City in the Millennium:

"But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem."
(Micah 4:1-2)

Why do our churches not sing out the praises of these wonderful prophecies? Why do we raise our children in ignorance of all that the LORD has said He will do? Why do our pastors mutter in perplexity about the future when our LORD has plainly told us what to expect?

Replacement Theology is a cancer eating away at the hearts and minds of men, mocking the promises of God, and offering a perverse vision of the future, a manmade utopia where the gulled masses of humanity will naively believe whatever they are told by their wicked taskmasters.

PART THREE

The Pre-incarnate Christ

Replacement Theology depends in part on the false belief that Christ had no contact with the children of Israel before he became incarnate in human form. This creates a sharp divide between the 'Old' and the 'New' Testaments, suggesting that if the New has replaced the Old, then the church has replaced Israel.

It is easier to maintain this false dichotomy if all theophanies relating to Christ are expunged from the Old Testament. The usual way of doing this is to interpret such theophanies as the work of an angel or "messenger" of God.

Fortunately, the Bible tells us how to avoid this pitfall. In Revelation, John was so overcome by the wisdom and splendour of the angel who spoke to him that he twice tried to bow down and worship him, but on each occasion he was rebuked by the angel and told to worship only God:

**"And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me,
See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy
brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God:
for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."
(Revelation 19:10)**

**"And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I
had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet
of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he
unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant,
and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which
keep the sayings of this book: worship God."
(Revelation 22:8-9)**

Since we know from this that angels will not allow themselves to be worshipped, and that God alone may be worshipped, we can safely infer that, in any instance where a messenger from heaven **is** worshipped, he cannot be an angel. And if he cannot be an angel, and only God is worshipped, then the "messenger" **must** have been divine. (Angels are NOT divine but created beings only.)

Now for some examples.

When Joshua was about to embark on his campaign of conquest in the land of Canaan, he was given divine assurance that the army of the LORD would be with him and the children of Israel throughout:

"And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? And the captain of the LORD's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so."

(Joshua 5:13-15)

The man, the **"captain of the LORD's host,"** was divine. The place where he stood was holy and Joshua fell on his face and worshipped him. He could not have been the Father since He dwells **"in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see"** (1 Timothy 6:16). Neither is he the Holy Spirit, who is never described as a man or a leader of angels. Therefore, the divine person must be Christ, who declares the Father to man:

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

(John 1:18)

Even though several years had elapsed since the Israelites had entered and conquered the Promised Land, they still had not complied with the LORD's command to utterly destroy all of the Canaanite tribes and their pagan altars. Chapter 2 of Judges records a very rare event – a theophany involving a large number of people – in response to this failure:

"And an angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this? Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you. And it came to pass, when the angel of the LORD spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice, and wept." (Judges 2:1-4)

Here **"the angel of the LORD"** identifies himself with the divine being who brought the tribes of Israel out of Egypt and into the Promised Land. He also identifies himself with the divine being who made the covenant with their fathers – Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – and who promised to drive out the Canaanites if the children of Israel were obedient to His word.

This divine messenger is Christ, **"the angel of the LORD"** (Note the definite article).

In this historical theophany before the leaders of the tribes of Israel, the Angel of the LORD, the Pre-incarnate Christ, shattered the teeth of replacement theology when he spoke those wonderful words, **"I will never break my covenant with you."**

When Adam walked in the Garden with God, he was walking with the Pre-incarnate Christ. When Cain committed his terrible crime, it was the Pre-incarnate Christ who came to him and spoke those solemn words regarding his destiny. Abraham spoke face to face with the Pre-incarnate Christ when he came to his tent in the company of two angels (who also took human form). The angel of the LORD – the Pre-incarnate Christ – also came to Hagar when she was in distress in the wilderness and pregnant with Ishmael. She even addressed the angel of the LORD as God:

**"And she called the name of the LORD that spake unto her,
Thou God seest me: for she said, Have I also here looked
after him that seeth me?" (Genesis 16:13)**

The angel of the LORD, the Pre-incarnate Christ, spoke to Abraham from heaven and told him to spare his son Isaac on the altar of sacrifice (Genesis 22:11-12). He also appeared to Moses in the burning bush (Exodus 3:2) and led him thereafter, speaking to him frequently – **"face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend"** – and instructing him in all matters relating to the welfare and liberation of his chosen people.

The angel of the LORD appeared to Balaam and was seen even by his donkey (Numbers 22). It is notable that the Pre-incarnate Christ did not confine himself to the children of Israel, but appeared also to certain Gentiles, such as Hagar and Balaam.

He even addressed Hagar a second time when Sarah cast her out some 16 years later. As she was dying of thirst, "the angel of God" spoke to her from heaven – the terms "the angel of God" and "the angel of the LORD" are used interchangeably in Judges 13 – and made a promise regarding her son that only God could make: **"I will make him a great nation."** (Genesis 21:18)

The angel of the LORD appeared to Gideon by the oak at Ophrah. At first he is referred to as "the angel of the LORD" and then as the LORD Himself: **"And the LORD looked upon him, and said..."** (Judges 6:14).

When the angel of the LORD appeared to Manoah (the father of Samson), Manoah asked him to confirm that he was the same man who had appeared earlier to his wife. He replied, **"I am."** This is the great signature statement of the deity of Christ in the New Testament. Later Manoah asked him his name, to which he replied: **"Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret?"** (Judges 13:18). The Hebrew word for "secret" in this sentence – *pil'iy* – also means "wonderful," which is one of the names given to Christ in Isaiah 9:5 (where the Hebrew word *pele* is used, from the same root as *pil'iy*).

Christ is the wonderful *I Am*, the Redeemer of all who put their trust in him, the angel of the LORD who "encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." (Psalm 91)

The Angel of the LORD appeared to Jacob in a dream...

**"And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, Jacob:
And I said, Here am I." (Genesis 31:11)**

And travelled through the wilderness with the children of Israel...

**"And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel,
removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud
went from before their face, and stood behind them:"
(Exodus 14:19)**

And revived Elijah the Tishbite...

**"But the angel of the LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite, Arise..."
(2 Kings 1:3)**

And specified the location of the Temple of the LORD in Jerusalem, at the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite...

**"And God sent an angel unto Jerusalem to destroy it:
and as he was destroying, the LORD beheld, and he
repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that
destroyed, It is enough, stay now thine hand.
And the angel of the LORD stood by the
threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite."
(1 Chronicles 21:15)**

And slew the vast Assyrian army that had encamped about Jerusalem...

**"Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in
the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore
and five thousand: and when they arose early in the
morning, behold, they were all dead corpses."
(Isaiah 37:36)**

It was almost certainly the Pre-incarnate Christ that appeared to Daniel by the great river, Hiddekel:

**"Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man
clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz:
His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of
lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like
in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice
of a multitude." (Daniel 10:5-6)**

The prophet Isaiah was taken into the presence of the Pre-incarnate Christ in a vision:

"In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple." (Isaiah 6:1)

And the prophet Ezekiel had a similar experience:

"...and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD." (Ezekiel 1:26-28)

The identity of the Angel of God is also revealed in the New Testament, where Paul states:

"For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve" (Acts 27:23)

He also confirmed that Christ was the supernatural protector of the Jewish people during their sojourn in the wilderness, **"the spiritual Rock that followed them"**:

"And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ [*Christos*]." (1 Corinthians 10:4)

The author of Hebrews also identifies the God of Moses with the person of Christ:

"By faith, Moses...Esteeming the reproach of Christ [*Christos*] greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward." (Hebrews 11:23-26)

Christians who are perplexed by the continuing place of Israel in God's holy plan need to reflect prayerfully on the above passages since they reveal that Christ was working among the Jewish people from the very earliest times, guiding their destiny and protecting them from their enemies.

Sometimes he revealed himself to his servants in human form, even though he was not yet humanly incarnate. He was preparing Israel for the time when he would take on human flesh and dwell among them – *Immanuel!*

Some of the angels also appeared in human form, but not one of them was ever subsequently born in human flesh. Christ had to take on human flesh, to become fully human, in order to pay our sin debt for us. He could die in our place only by living perfectly as we should have lived and taking our place on the cross. To do this he had to have a fully human nature.

Equally, if we are to live with him in eternity, we too must have eternal human bodies, resurrection bodies, just as he has – "**the firstfruits of them that slept.**" (1 Corinthians 15:20)

Every time they went after other gods, the Israelites were rejecting the LORD. Their entire history was one of disobedience and idolatry, with short periods of reconciliation and restoration. Their rejection of Christ in his incarnate form, as Jesus of Nazareth, was foreshadowed by their rejection of him many times previously in his pre-incarnate form.

And just as the LORD God sought them out and restored them after each of their many stiff-necked, hardhearted rebellions against His authority and His holiness, so too will He seek them out after this, their worst rebellion of all.

Each rebellion brought punishment, and the punishment that the LORD is now inflicting upon His children – as protracted and as painful and as severe as it has been – will also have an end. And when finally they repent and call upon him – "**Baruch haba b'shem Adonai!**" – he will come immediately to their aid.

Despite the severity of their punishment, the LORD has never allowed their enemies to utterly destroy them. Though Satan would long ago have murdered every last one of them, he was not permitted to do so. Just as they are under God's judgment, they are also under His protection. The Angel of the LORD is with them still.

PART FOUR

The Resurgence of Christian Antisemitism

When I was saved in September, 2008, I felt an enormous sense of gratitude to the Jewish people for recording and preserving the Bible. Without it, I would know nothing of God's holy will.

As I studied His wonderful Word, I was deeply struck by the love that He had for Israel. Contrary to all that I had heard, the God of the Old Testament was a God of love, a God more caring and protective than I could ever have imagined. Around 4,000 years ago He picked just one man, Abraham, and used him and his descendants, through his grandson Jacob, to reveal Himself to mankind.

Today, as born-again Christians, we are the beneficiaries of an inheritance that far exceeds anything we could ever hope to receive, and all because of Israel. Through their seed, the LORD gave His Son, incarnate in human flesh, to live among us. A Jew like his fellow Jews, he lived perfectly in accordance with his Father's will and, through his suffering and death, paid our sin debt for us.

The more I studied God's plan, the more I was struck by the role that Israel has played, and continues to play, in the redemption of mankind. When the Jews rejected their Messiah, they went to sleep as it were and will awaken as a nation only when they are about to be annihilated by the counterfeit Christian church (The true church will, by that time, have departed in the Rapture). As the 'dry bones' prophecy in Ezekiel 37 foretold, they are now coming together in their own land, but as a nation they are still as alienated from God as when they rejected their Messiah some 2,000 years ago.

Before we discuss Antisemitism, we need to be clear about the existing spiritual condition of the Jewish people. They are lost in the same way that all who have rejected Christ are lost and they will be saved in the same way that all who accept Christ are saved.

Some Jews, a tiny percentage, have already been born again, but the Bible tells us that, in the fullness of time, **"all Israel shall be saved"**, meaning the vast majority of Jews who are still alive when Christ returns:

**"And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written,
There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and
shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob"
(Romans 11:26)**

The Book of Zechariah tells us, however, that two thirds of all Jews in the land of Israel – or possibly the entire earth – will die in the Great Tribulation:

**"And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD,
two parts therein shall be cut off and die;
but the third shall be left therein."
(Zechariah 13:8)**

While the full horror of the Shoah is difficult to comprehend, the coming Holocaust will be even worse. Despite this, the very next verse – Zechariah 13:9 – describes the wonderful culmination of the promises that the LORD made to His chosen people:

**"And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them
as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call
on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people:
and they shall say, The LORD is my God."
(Zechariah 13:9)**

Jesus may have alluded allegorically to this prophetic event when he healed the blind man at Bethsaida:

"And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him. And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought. And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking. After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly. And he sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town." (Mark 8:22-26)

Many Bible scholars have commented on the uniqueness of this miraculous healing since it came in two phases, thereby suggesting – it would seem – that the first phase was only partly successful and that a further step was needed to achieve a complete healing. No other miracle by Jesus was performed in this way.

To appreciate the significance of this miracle we must note another unique feature – before he performed it, Jesus first took the man by the hand and led him out of the town of Bethsaida.

Bethsaida was one of the towns over which Jesus uttered a terrible imprecation:

**"Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes."
(Matthew 11:21)**

The comparison with Tyre and Sidon finds an echo in Revelation:

**"And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified."
(Revelation 11:8)**

We can see here a parallel between rebellious Bethsaida and rebellious Jerusalem. Just as Jesus led the blind man by the hand out of the unbelieving city of Bethsaida and healed him in stages of his physical blindness, so will he also lead the righteous remnant (via Michael the Archangel) out of unbelieving Jerusalem (at the mid-point of the Tribulation) and heal them in stages of their spiritual blindness. At first they will see only vaguely that something of immense spiritual significance is taking place, but finally, when they **"look up,"** their eyes will finally open and – *Baruch haba b'shem Adonai* – they will behold in shock and wonder their glorious Messiah.

Thus, when we read Zechariah 13:9 a second time we can see how the healing of their blindness corresponds to the refining process mentioned by the prophet:

**"And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God."
(Zechariah 13:9)**

As the Word of God declares, when the scales finally fall from their eyes, **"they shall call on my name, and I will hear them."**

Satan is determined to ensure that this critical moment never arrives. He will do all he can to prevent the Jews as a nation from calling on the Messiah and proclaiming, **"Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD"** (Matthew 23:39) and **"The LORD is my God"** (Zechariah 13:9).

This is the whole basis of Antisemitism. The dark prince of this world must continually urge the rest of humanity to distrust the Jews and perceive them as a threat. Church leaders today are largely oblivious to his remarkable skills in this regard and to his influence generally in shaping human behavior.

Satan would have destroyed the Jews long ago had he been able, but the LORD has never permitted him to go that far. While they are certainly under God's judgment, they are also under His protection – **"Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail."** (Psalm 89:33)

Through his influence over the minds and hearts of fallen men, and in particular those who take pleasure in wickedness, Satan has been able to stoke the fires of Antisemitism with relative ease.

The Bible gives us an insight into how this works. In 1 Kings 22, the LORD sent a "lying spirit" to the false prophets who were advising the wicked king Ahab. He also sent "an evil spirit" to generate enmity between the wicked Abimelech and the citizens of Shechem (Judges 9). In these instances, the LORD was allowing the wicked to reap in full what they had sown. However, Satan himself will routinely despatch a "lying spirit" or an "evil spirit" to infiltrate the thoughts and disposition of a professing Christian. Unless he is obedient to God's Word and clothes himself daily in the armor of God – as described in Ephesians 6 – he is vulnerable to such an attack.

The root cause of Antisemitism

The root cause of Antisemitism is Satan's insane hatred of the Jews. Human manifestations of this ancient animus are fundamentally an expression of this same hatred. As a result, men and women who allow themselves to be infected by this enmity are generally unable to see that their attitude is irrational. They find it much easier to believe a sinister claim or a dark insinuation than to question its basis and test it objectively.

Please remember, we are not speaking here about 'bad' people. Antisemitism thrives on the ignorance of well-meaning individuals.

In my experience, most professing Christians today are Antisemitic. On 29 August, 2013, I attended a presentation at the Irish Bible Institute in Dublin. It was given by a prominent spokesman for the 'Palestinians' who was also an organizer of the intensely Antisemitic 'Christ at the Checkpoint' conferences. The audience of 60 or so nodded with approval during his hour-long presentation, which was replete with historical inaccuracies and shameless distortions of Biblical truth.

During the subsequent Q&A session, despite repeated attempts on my part to challenge his many inaccuracies and correct the worst of his errors, it became depressingly clear that not one person in the room – professing Christians all – was prepared even to *question* the veracity of any part of what he said.

When I challenged the chairman to allow an alternative viewpoint to be expressed at a future meeting, he declined repeatedly to make any such commitment. Later, several attendees refused to accept the brochures which I gave out after the meeting.

These people were not hardened atheists or Muslims or a radical fringe group, but (apparently) evangelical, Bible-believing Christians! I learned afterwards that two or three of them were in silent agreement with what I said but were too intimidated by the tone of the meeting to voice their opinion.

The Irish Bible Institute showed itself in its true colors that evening.

Presbyterian Antisemitism

There have been so many Antisemitic and anti-Zionist manifestos, movements and programs over the past thirty years or so, all supported or endorsed by the professing Christian church, that it would be impossible to deal satisfactorily with all of them. We will focus instead on just one document, published in 2014, that would seem to amalgamate the bulk of these phony arguments, as well as the fallacies and outright lies that have been used to such poisonous effect in recent years by the enemies of Israel.

In January 2014, the Presbyterian Church (USA) made available for sale on its website a 74-page booklet, *Zionism Unsettled: A Congregational Study Guide*, which had been compiled by the *Israel/Palestine Mission Network of the Presbyterian Church (USA)*. The latter was created in 2004 by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) "to advocate for Palestinian rights."

While the document itself was never officially endorsed by the General Assembly, it received significant informal endorsement from its distribution (along with a companion DVD) via the Presbyterian Church (USA) website, from the fact that it was produced by an official body established for that purpose by the Presbyterian Church (USA), and from the official adoption by the church of a widely publicized anti-Israel divestment strategy.

[All references hereafter to the 'Presbyterian Church' apply to the 'Presbyterian Church USA' **only** and not to any other Presbyterian denomination, either in America or elsewhere.]

Following strong criticism from Jewish groups in America, the Presbyterian Church removed the booklet from its website in June, 2014. A notice dated June 27 stated:

Last week in Detroit, the 221st General Assembly passed a resolution declaring that the booklet *Zionism Unsettled* "does not represent the views of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)." The Israel-Palestine Mission Network, which produced the booklet, may continue to sell and distribute it through other channels.

The hypocrisy behind this announcement was evident for all to see. Incredibly, the Presbyterian Church did **not** reject or condemn the many libellous claims in the document. By withdrawing the offending tract from its website it merely sought to convey the impression that it no longer endorsed its contents. Nevertheless in the same breath it declared that the Israel-Palestine Mission Network – its own subsidiary – "may continue to sell and distribute it through other channels." In other words, apart from this token gesture, the Presbyterian Church continued to approve the distribution of a flagrantly Antisemitic document. By implication, its members too could continue to use it as a *congregational study guide* in a classroom setting and to disseminate its message to a wider audience.

Abrasive, condemnatory language

The adversarial and emotive tone of the document may be seen from its use throughout of abrasive, condemnatory language when describing Israel and the Jews who live there. This alone tells us that there is something seriously wrong with its supposedly 'Christian' perspective. Here is a sample list:

Examples of the condemnatory terminology used throughout the Presbyterian document, <i>Zionism Unsettled</i>	
tribal xenophobia	Israel is an anachronism
ethnic cleansing	demonization
military occupation	marginalization
toxic relationship	settler colonialism
land confiscation	cultic practices
the pathology inherent in Zionism	Judean temple-state
psychological scarring	externally-imposed subjugation
cycle of victimization	religious imperialism
guilt-neutralizing mechanisms	simplistic sophistry
narrative of denial	perfectly perverse
morally hazardous claims	maximalist agenda
moral calculus	dispossession
moral myopia	terroristic nationalism
ethical exceptionalism	retrogressive primitive tribalism
rogue behavior	idolatrous political nationalism
occupied territories	oppression and exploitation
expropriated land	Constantinian hegemony
eternal victimhood	emotional blackmail
moral degeneration	fanatic, illiberal discourse
Judaization	racism and intolerance
de-Arabization	the imperialism of righteousness
suppressing dissenting perspectives	systematic violation of International law
hawkish monitoring groups	pauperization of the Palestinian people
Holocaust theology	core crimes
ethnocracy	cultural massacre
illegal settlements	cultural genocide
racist education system	immense confidence trick
socialization process	confiscation of land

It beggars belief that the largest Presbyterian denomination in North America should support such a document. Do sincere, Bible-believing Christians within the Presbyterian community realize what is being done in their name? This venomous polemic not only libels the Jewish people but, in doing so, presents a sickening caricature of Christianity.

In the following pages we will examine extracts from the document and illustrate, as space permits, just how far the Presbyterian Church has departed from the immutable truth of God's Word.

The 'Nakba'

"*Nakba* is the Arabic word for 'Catastrophe' and refers to the massive ethnic cleansing of over 750,000 Palestinians, the confiscation of Palestinian land, and the destruction of over 500 Palestinian villages by Israeli forces in 1947-48 when the British vacated Palestine and Israel became a state. The Hebrew term for the Nazi Holocaust, *Shoah*, also translates as 'Catastrophe'. The interconnection and causality between the Jewish and Palestinian catastrophes has led some to observe that the Palestinians are, in some ways, secondary victims of the Nazi Holocaust." [p.6]

The picture presented in this extract is obscene. The displacement of '750,000' Arabs – the number is greatly exaggerated – is placed on the same moral plane as the murder of six million Jews. The fact that the majority of these Arabs left Israel on foot of intimidation from neighboring Arab countries is simply ignored.

Also, the definition that the authors give for the term *Nakba* is grossly misleading. While it certainly means 'Catastrophe', it refers only to the wholesale defeat of the invading Arab nations – who were engaged in a campaign of annihilation – and not to the consequential loss of property by displaced Arabs. The defeat of 1948 was certainly a catastrophe, a major slap in the face for Islam. Even with six well-trained armies and far superior weaponry, they were unable to defeat a tiny beleaguered state in a surprise attack. It was a 'catastrophe' precisely because it was so painfully embarrassing. The Arabs and their proud military leaders had been humiliated before the world.

"...1.2 million Palestinian Arabs live in Israel as second-class citizens" [quote by Professor Rashid Khalidi of Columbia University]. [p.5]

The document fails to state that Arabs living in Israel today, as naturalized citizens, enjoy the same rights in law as other Israelis. The only right that is withheld from them, for obvious reasons, is the right to join the Israeli Defense Forces. Moreover, the number of Arabs living in Israel has continued to increase. Why? Because they enjoy a much better standard of living and greater personal security in Israel than they would in any other Arab country.

Jewish homeland

"Zionism was (and remains) not just about the colonization of Palestinian land, but also about colonizing minds – Jewish, Arab, European, American." [quote by Nur Masalha, Arab historian] [p.5]

The accusation that Zionism by its very nature is a subversive ideology runs through the entire document. At no stage does it concede that Zionism is nothing more than the legitimate aspiration among Jewish people worldwide for a homeland of their own and to have it recognized as such by the international community. When various regional Arab groups and tribal coalitions acquired a recognized homeland after the break-up of the Ottoman Empire, they were not accused of pursuing a subversive program of colonization. This charge has never been levelled at the Syrians, the Iraqis, the Saudis, the Jordanians, or the Lebanese, among others. But when the Jews of the Ottoman Empire acquired a homeland on the same basis as other indigenous ethnic groups, in accordance with the same international laws and protocols, they are accused of colonization. The document rages against the very idea that the Jews are entitled to a national homeland. Again and again it equates Zionism, not only with colonization, but with oppression, racism, and ethnic cleansing.

This is **not** a balanced Christian account of the modern history of the Jewish people but a deeply flawed and intensely bigoted attempt to delegitimize the nation state of Israel.

The vilification of Zionism

"...Israel can live in a post-Zionist age by adapting to the world as it is, or it can die in one." [quote by Ian Lustick, lecture at the Carnegie Endowment, 2013] [p.7]

In its vilification of Zionism the document repeatedly asserts that, as an 'ideology', it cannot be tolerated in our modern, pluralistic world. The quotation implies that a "post-Zionist age" is inevitable and that the Jews will either have to accept it or suffer the consequences.

It is deeply disturbing that the Presbyterian Church should use as a 'congregational study guide' a document that not only supports the creation of a "post-Zionist" world but even condones the use of force in order to achieve it.

"With their own people's history in mind, Jewish critics of Israel have warned of the disastrous potential of Jewish state power" [p.8]

The authors exploit to the utmost the anti-Israeli pronouncements of certain Jews, presumably to deflect from themselves the charge of Antisemitism. They allege that a state in which Jews are in the majority is one in which minorities will at some stage be subjugated or destroyed.

The preceding paragraphs in the document referred to "violence toward other peoples," fanaticism, Muslim extremism, and the Armenian genocide. Thus, they are implying that the continued existence of a Jewish state must necessarily pose a threat to the well-being of other ethnic and religious groups in the region. The racism and hypocrisy behind this allegation are breathtaking. No reference whatever is made to the dozens of despotic Islamic regimes that routinely brutalize, persecute, imprison, torture and murder Christians and other minorities, and yet the authors perceive as dangerous a democratic state that upholds and defends the rights of all her citizens, regardless of their ethnicity or religion.

The *Shoah*

The document condemns Israel for what it describes as "its obsession with the Shoah" [p.9], claiming that "the distortions of the Holocaust created distortions in its victims."

One of the chief characteristics of an irrational hatred is its determination to deprive the target group of all moral legitimacy. The victims must have done something to bring so much suffering upon themselves. Such persecution is inevitable, it implies, whenever an ethnic or religious group tries to set itself apart. By adopting this cynical technique, the authors attempt to exploit the horror of the *Shoah* for their own selfish ends.

As Christians we know that God Himself set Israel apart and gave to the Jews a role and purpose that distinguished them from all other nations. Why then does the Presbyterian Church see fit to denigrate the Jews in this way? Why do they profess to be Bible-believing Christians and yet condone a document that blatantly conflicts with God's Word?

An attack on Christian Zionists

"Christian Zionism... [has] been sheltered from open debate despite the intolerable human rights abuses rooted in [its] core beliefs" [p.9]

The document vilifies, not only Jewish Zionists but Christian Zionists, namely Bible-believing Christians who accept as irrevocable the covenant that the LORD made with the children of Israel. The implications of this charge are far-reaching since the authors are effectively saying that it is immoral, not just to support Zionism, but to believe that the Bible endorses the Jewish claim to the land of Israel.

A critical line has been crossed here. The authors presume to have the authority to condemn, not only Jews who support Israel, but also Christians who do so, even on religious grounds.

Many readers of the document will probably miss the significance of this. Christian Zionism is being classified as a thought crime against humanity. Bible-believing Christians can no longer interpret the Bible as their conscience and their understanding direct but are obliged instead to accept the interpretation handed down by the 'experts'. The Presbyterian elders, presumably, will decide what the Bible 'really' means and ostracize anyone who thinks otherwise. In short, Christian Zionism is now being treated as a heresy, even if the label is not being applied in this instance (though it *is* applied later in the document).

In the past a heresy was defined exclusively by reference to theological considerations, but not anymore. As the document says, "no exceptionalist claims can be justified in our interconnected, pluralistic world" [p.9]. Today the mainstream 'Christian' churches are using social and political criteria to decide what the Bible 'really' means and thereby formulating an entirely new class of heresy.

We should hardly be surprised that the Presbyterian Church (USA) also supports the homosexual agenda, including same-sex 'marriage', and reinterprets (i.e. dismisses) the verses in Scripture that plainly describe homosexuality as sinful.

The foundation of Israel

"The United Nations Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) 1947 partition plan granted a disproportionate share of territory to the Zionists relative to either their population or their land ownership at the time." [p.10]

The above quotation fails to mention that UNSCOP acted **contrary** to international law by reducing the territory granted to the new state of Israel to less than one fifth of the land allocated for that purpose under the San Remo accord of 1920. Yes, the UNSCOP grant was "disproportionate," but in favor of the Arabs, not the Jews! This is one of several instances where the authors amend or ignore documented historical facts to support their version of events.

It should be noted, also, that the Jews living in Israel at that time are here described as 'Zionists', thereby implying that the state of Israel at its foundation, regardless of its territorial extent, was illegitimate.

The protection of Israel

"The 2004 International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruling against the separation barrier Israel has constructed on expropriated Palestinian land within the West Bank calls on Israel to "cease the construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territories..." [p.10]

The Presbyterian document condemns the construction of the wall that protects ordinary Israelis from suicide bombers and Islamic assassins. No mention is made of the many lives lost in such attacks or of the terror generated by the random butchery of innocent people. Instead they complain of "concomitant infringements...on Palestinian freedom of movement." They clearly see no moral discontinuity between the convenience of Arabs and the murder of Jews.

The document then launches into a bitter tirade against the US for using its veto at the UN Security Council to protect Israel from a long series of adverse UN Resolutions. Without a hint of irony, it claims that the "will of the majority" has been sidelined, where the majority in question invariably includes the 50 or so Islamic states that hate Israel and have pledged to destroy her.

Along the way it cites UN Security Council Resolution 267 of 3 July, 1969, which reaffirmed "the established principle that acquisition of territory by military conquest is inadmissible." This implies that Israel had engaged in a campaign of military conquest when in fact she had sought only to prevent a large invasion force from annexing her territory and, if possible, destroying her completely. It is a long established principle of warfare that when a country engages in a campaign of extermination, it risks losing part of its own territory. Israel was both morally entitled and militarily obliged to retain territory gained in these wars of self-defense. This included Judea and Samaria (the so-called West Bank), the Gaza strip, the Golan Heights, the Sinai Peninsula, and east Jerusalem.

The Presbyterian document pretends throughout that Israel is the aggressor, when history clearly shows that she is the target of an ongoing Islamic campaign to wipe her off the map and murder or relocate her entire population. The document cannot concede, even in principle, that Israel has every right to defend herself by force. Neither does it question the ongoing Islamic campaign of murder and aggression or the grotesque enforcement of values and standards found in the Koran. Indeed, anyone who was unfamiliar with the religious beliefs of the Presbyterian Church (USA) would never guess, from this document alone, that it was grounded in the gospel or teachings of Jesus Christ.

"As expected war broke out between Jewish and Arab forces when Israel declared independence in May, 1948" [p.14]
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This is typical of the authors' cavalier treatment of undisputed historical facts. War did not "break out" – implying that both sides were to blame – but one side launched a massive military invasion on several fronts with a view to annihilating the other. Furthermore the Jews did not declare independence unilaterally in May 1948 but instead exercised the right they already had under international law to establish a Jewish homeland in the Holy Land. The UN had already formally approved the creation of the state of Israel via Resolution 181, dated 29 November 1947.

The account of page 14 of the alleged "systematic and total expulsion of Palestinians from their homeland" in the period 1947-49 is not supported by historical evidence. The majority of Arabs left in response to pressure from military leaders in neighboring Arab states. Anyone who remained ran the risk of being branded a traitor to the Arab cause. Besides, they expected to be able to return a few months later once the 'Jewish question' had been settled through murder and bloodshed.

Taqiyya

The credibility of Arab claims is further undermined by an Islamic practice of long standing known as *Taqiyya*, whereby a Muslim is permitted, even required, to deceive his enemy, by lies and fabrication if necessary, in order to advance the cause of Islam.

"...the region [north Africa and the Middle East] became inflamed at the perceived injustice of the enforced partition of Palestine, the creation of a Jewish state, the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians..."
[p.14]

In line with *Taqiyya*, the historical narrative is turned upside down. The authors are claiming, disingenuously, that the creation of a Jewish state was *indeed* unjust, that the Jews had no legal entitlement to land in the region, and that the Arab claims of mass expulsion were entirely accurate.

They do not acknowledge that the Arabs were violating international law by evicting around 800,000 Jews from Arab countries, expropriating their property, and threatening the security of Israel on an ongoing basis. They also fail to mention that the UN offered the Arabs a significant parcel of land – a *second* 'Palestinian' state – within the territory covered by the British Mandate, but they refused to accept it. [We will discuss the *first* 'Palestinian' state in a moment.]

The Presbyterian Dismissal of the Bible

"...the secular Ben-Gurion appropriated the biblical stories for a nationalistic civil religion that would later buttress the expansionism [of Israel]" [p.15]

Ben-Gurion is denounced for consulting the Bible. Later in the document the authors deride Netanyahu's revival of the regular Bible Class that Ben-Gurion conducted, dismissing it as "a nationalist appropriation of the Bible as history." [p.22]

This is an extraordinary claim. One would have thought that, of all people, the Jews were entitled to seek guidance from the Bible and to treat it as a legitimate historical record, but the Presbyterian document alleges that their leaders are using it only as a pretext for an expansionist agenda. For sheer *chutzpah* (not a word the authors would have chosen) such cynicism is difficult to beat.

Constantinian religion

"Israeli policies are also an expression of 'Constantinian religion'" [p.16]

This refers to "the fusion of state power with Judaism" [p.16], which the authors allege is abusive in much the same way that the state power wielded by the Roman Catholic Church was abusive (following the adoption of 'Christianity' as the official religion of the empire by the Emperor Constantine in 312 AD). The authors are trying to defame the civil government of Israel by claiming that its Judaic character necessarily causes it to discriminate against non-Jews. The libel is magnified by comparing Israel with the church of Rome, which has a long and sadistic history of Antisemitism. The document is suggesting that, since the Jews were at one time the victims of systematic state persecution, they have perversely incorporated a similar prejudice into their own state apparatus.

The same technique is being used again, whereby the past suffering of the Jews is imputed to a supposed defect in their spiritual and moral character. Facetious and irrational arguments like this have been used routinely by Antisemites for centuries to prove that the Jews are, and will always be, an endless source of trouble for the rest of humanity.

The mythical 'state' of 'Palestine'

"These changes had the effect of erasing Palestine not only from maps but also from the minds of Israelis" [p.18]

After the annexation of the 'West Bank' by the Israeli government in 1967, the Israelis renamed it *Judea and Samaria*. Given that these names were applied historically to the region, it seemed eminently reasonable to incorporate them into maps used by Israeli students. Prior to 1967, the territory was governed by Jordan and never existed as a sovereign entity known as 'Palestine'. In reality 'Palestine' is not a political term at all but a topographical designation, similar to 'Iberia'. Iberia comprises three political entities – Spain, Portugal, and Gibraltar – but does not in itself have any necessary political connotations.

The Presbyterian document is peddling the old lie that a sovereign entity known as 'Palestine' had once existed in the region but that due to the perfidy of the Jews it has since been extinguished. However, such an entity has *never* existed. As a topographical region it was never more than a tiny province in the Ottoman Empire. Even when it was under Arab control – when Jordan governed the region of Judea and Samaria in the period 1949-1967 – it was regarded as an amorphous tract of land with no ethnic association. The idea that it belonged to a distinct group of Arabs known as 'Palestinians' was considered ridiculous, even by the Arabs themselves.

The charge of racism

"This is one example of the similarities between Zionism, South African apartheid, and Jim Crow segregation in the Southern US"
[p.18]

According to the Presbyterian document, the Jews are racist because they believe what the LORD said about them in the Bible. It seems Zionism is an ideology with "a political-religious blend" [p.18] that cannot be trusted. Without any historical evidence, the authors make an inexplicable connection between Jewish nationalism and the deplorable history of racial discrimination in South Africa and the US. The reader is being asked to believe a scurrilous non-sequitur, namely that an Israeli who loves his country, and who does so on religious grounds, must by definition be a racist brute. Sadly, this kind of "reasoning" and pseudo-logic abounds throughout the document.

Through several disparaging references to Jabotinsky, Begin, the *Irgun*, and armed activism generally by the Israelis, the document implies that the Jews should continue to submit passively to the same Gentile oppression that they have had to endure for nearly two thousand years. It would take far more space than we have available to deal with the many false accusations that are scattered throughout the document, the repeated mischaracterization of Israeli attempts to defend their country, and the astonishing indifference by the critics of Israel to the ongoing war of aggression, terrorism and political sabotage that is being conducted against her by the Arabs and the nations of Islam.

The document even trivializes genuine Israeli concerns about their own survival in the face of continual aggression – "Israeli politics are driven by actual and manipulated fear of annihilation (another Holocaust)..." [p.20] While members of the Presbyterian church may worry about the cost of living or rising unemployment, the citizens of Israel worry whether their children will come home safely from school, whether a rocket fired by Hamas or Hezbollah will explode in their back yard, or whether their town or village will still be standing in five years time. And they have genuine (and justifiable) concern that in the long run the rabid bands of Islam will eventually succeed in overwhelming their country and wiping them all out.

The cynical rejection of historical facts

"It is hard to find any evidence that recent Israeli governments have any intention of negotiating a just peace with Palestinians."
[p.20]

This is yet another contemptuous dismissal of established facts. The Israeli government has long sought a fair basis for a negotiated settlement with the Arabs, but has been frustrated again and again by Islamic intransigence. Despite having made a number of major concessions over the years, the Arabs have never responded in kind. In fact they have moved in the opposite direction and used terror as an instrument of 'negotiation', thereby deliberately reducing the prospects of a peaceful solution.

"...Palestinian recognition of Israel as a "Jewish state" would mean acceptance that the Jews have existed in the Middle East for thousands of years..." [p.21]

But they *have* existed in the Middle East for thousands of years! The Presbyterian Church has departed so far from Biblical truth that it is prepared to question this simple fact.

The homes being built by Jews in Judea and Samaria are described as "illegal Jewish settlements" [p.7]. It is extraordinary that a so-called 'Christian' document should claim that Jews have no entitlement to build in this region but that Arabs have. The supposed illegality of these settlements is based on resolutions passed by the UN, an organization that has consistently opposed all attempts by Israel to protect her territorial integrity and which even passed a resolution in 1975 condemning Zionism "as a form of racism" (This was not rescinded until 1991).

Given that the UN Charter is based on the constitution of the old Soviet Union, that it is flagrantly hostile to Judeo-Christian values, and that its primary purpose is the replacement of independent sovereign states with a global system of governance, its ongoing hostility to Israel is easy to understand. When one adds to this mix the potent Antisemitism of over fifty Islamic countries and the prevalence of Marxist ideology among the ruling classes of many UN member states, we have a situation where 'legal' and 'legality' mean whatever the majority decides.

A Bible-believing Christian knows that this is not God's way, but it would seem that the Presbyterian Church has lost all fear of God and found its own way.

[As I examined the document there were several occasions when I thought, 'They can't actually be saying this!' But they were, and more besides.]

Christian Zionism is described as a heresy

"The time has come for us all to name the Christian theological and ethical failures that gave rise to Zionism..." [p.23]

Here we have a fairly direct attack on Christian Zionism, where Christians who support Israel on Biblical grounds – and who take Bible prophecy seriously – will in future be marginalized and possibly even labelled apostate for their beliefs.

Some modern theologians are already describing Christian Zionism as either an aberration or a heresy. Since the number of Christians who support Israel has fallen dramatically over the past few decades, the deliberate isolation of those who remain faithful to Bible prophecy will have a major impact on the born-again Christian church.

We are witnessing today, not just an attack on Israel and Judaism, but on the fundamental doctrines of Bible-based Christianity. This document, and others like it, are part of an orchestrated campaign of change within the church, where the interpretation of Bible doctrine will be shaped primarily by its role in promoting inclusiveness, tolerance, and interfaith dialogue. The Bible will no longer mean what it plainly says – and Christians who continue to believe that it does will be "held accountable." If you doubt this, then consider one of the questions listed for *Reflection* on p.43 of the document:

1. Should US Christian and Jewish organizations that promote a pro-Zionist US foreign policy be held accountable for promoting violence and oppression toward the Palestinian people? [p.43]

What exactly do they mean by "held accountable"? This question, and the fact that it needs to be asked at all, is an indication of just how sinister this document really is, both in tone and content.

The Emirate of Trans-Jordan

"As the colonial British Mandate was terminated in 1947, Palestinians did not gain sovereignty and self-determination as did other peoples emerging from colonialism..." [p.27]

This is a serious distortion of what actually happened. The Emirate of Transjordan, now known simply as Jordan, was recognized by the League of Nations in 1922 – even though the land in question was part of the territory administered by Britain for the purpose of establishing a Jewish homeland. In other words, the Arabs living in the land of Israel – which today are referred to erroneously as 'Palestinians' – were given their *own* sovereign state in 1922. The legal claim on this territory by the Jews under the San Remo agreement of 1920 was simply ignored by the British.

Jordan is 35,600 square miles in extent, while Israel today is 10,700 square miles. Given that all of this territory – some 46,000 square miles – had been set aside under international law for the establishment of a Jewish homeland, the **Arabs** ended up owning 77 per cent of it! And yet they are still demanding a large chunk of the remainder, which legally belongs to Israel.

The Presbyterian document also perpetuates the myth that the Arabs living under the Mandate were a distinct ethnic group, known as the 'Palestinians'. As history plainly shows, this claim is absurd. They were in the main economic migrants (first and second generation) from neighboring Arab countries, attracted to Israel by the successful agricultural and industrial enterprises introduced by the Jews. Many today have Arabic names that suggest their possible country of origin. Some of the most common 'Palestinian' names include Al-Mughrabi (meaning "the Moroccan"), Al-Yamani ("the Yemini"), Al-Djazair ("the Algerian"), Halabi (from Aleppo, Syria), Hourani (from Hauran, southern Syria), Al-Masri ("the Egyptian"), Al-Baghdadi (from Baghdad), etc.

Yasser Arafat was the chief architect of the 'Palestinian' deception, but he made the mistake of choosing a flag for his fictional ethnic group that was virtually identical to that of Jordan, the real home of the so-called Palestinian Arabs:



Flag of Jordan



Flag of 'Palestine'

As Arafat boasted in his official biography, "If there is any such thing as a Palestinian people, it is I, Yasser Arafat, who created them." (*Arafat* by Alan Hart, 1994). The biography contains several more quotations by Arafat in a similar vein.

Vatican hostility to the Jews and Israel

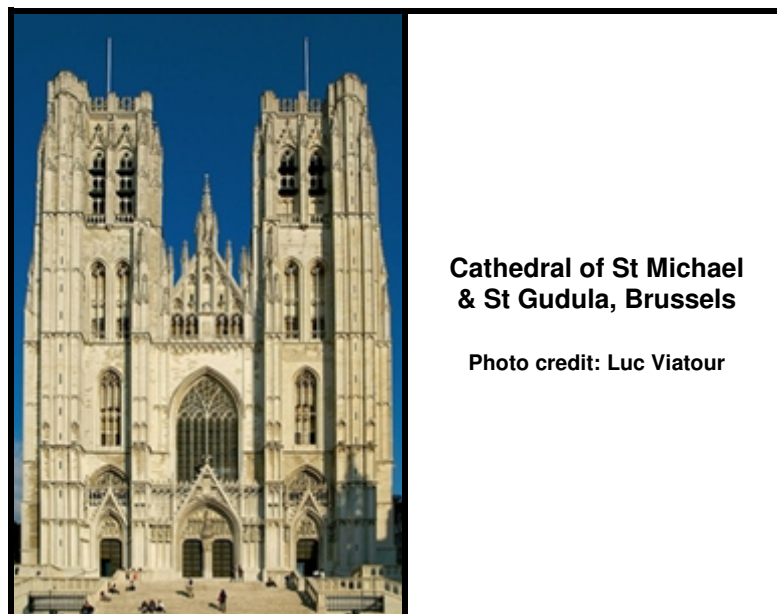
"*Nostra Aetate* brought an end to Roman Catholic theological criticism of Judaism and consequently the state of Israel. After 1965, Vatican criticism of Israel would be grounded in ethical, not theological, objections, and the need for peace based on a just solution to sharing the land of Palestine between the two peoples."
[p.29]

Contrary to what this extract declares, the Papal document *Nostra Aetate* did **not** end the Vatican's theological objection to Judaism and Israel. While it actually made some relatively positive statements about Judaism, which it had never previously done, the fundamental theological objection was not removed. As *Nostra Aetate* states, "...the church is the new people of God..." This is the old lie of Replacement Theology, with all the antipathy, both political and theological, that this entails.

Surprisingly, with the publication of *Nostra Aetate*, many Jews mistakenly believed that the Roman Catholic Church had undergone a major change in attitude toward Judaism and Israel. They failed to see that the five-word lie – "the church has replaced Israel" – was the original and abiding source of all Roman Catholic hostility to Judaism. While the charge of deicide, which historically had figured prominently in the popular imagination, was the main emotional conduit for this hostility, it was enabled in the main by the indelible theological conviction that God had decisively and permanently rejected the Jews.

We would note also that *Nostra Aetate* did not recognize the truth of Judaism in its own right, but only that it shared in the esteem warranted by all major world religions. From a Papal perspective, as far as any claim upon revealed truth is concerned, Judaism is no different from Islam, Buddhism or Hinduism.

For a flavor of the attitude that Rome still holds toward the Jews, one need only look to the Cathedral of St Michael & St Gudula in Brussels:



Among its many imposing stained-glass windows is a series depicting the alleged desecration of the "host" (communion wafer) by a group of local Jews in 1370 [See photos overleaf]. A supposed confession was extracted under extreme torture and the 'culprits' executed. During the alleged rite of desecration the host is supposed to have shed actual blood (Roman Catholics believe the communion wafer is the physical body of Christ) and many reported miracles thereafter were attributed to this supernatural event. Even after 645 years this deplorable crime against the Jews is still celebrated annually at the Cathedral on the Sunday following 15 July.

Overleaf:

Three panels in a series of several large stained glass windows at the Cathedral of St Michael & St Gudula, Brussels, depicting the supposed Jewish desecration of the Roman Catholic communion host in 1370.



The 'Jews' attack and kill a Roman Catholic priest and steal his consecrated communion host.

Photo credit:
Crow Canyon Journal



The 'Jews' gather around the consecrated communion host and stab it repeatedly in a satanic ritual.

Photo credit:
Crow Canyon Journal



The 'Jews' are condemned to death before an official court of justice.

Photo credit:
Crow Canyon Journal

The God of Israel

""A voice that looks to the messianic day in which all nations will ultimately serve the *God of Israel* cannot be the voice of God"... Devoted followers of every religion are moved in this manner by their own holy narratives." [p.30]

The document completely rejects the exclusivity of the truths revealed in the Bible and grants to other religions – including Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism – a portion of truth which, within their own 'holy narratives', is as valid as that of the Scripture revealed to the Jews.

It is difficult to believe that this heresy actually appears in a 'congregational study guide' recommended by the Presbyterian Church. We have here a so-called Christian church that no longer teaches that God's revelation of Himself in Christ is the sole foundation of truth. According to the authors, the most that any Christian can claim is that "the life, death, and resurrection of Christ is the most complete revelation of God *that we know and that we have experienced.*" [p.30] (emphasis in original).

This is the old pagan lie that "all paths lead to god." It is also the foundation on which the coming one-world religion will be built – where all truth is god's truth, where god is whatever you conceive him to be, where no souls are eternally damned, where everyone is a divine spark or atom of god, where all religions are an expression of divine truth, where all men and women are evolving into a higher state of consciousness, where fresh revelation is being received by contemporary prophets and mystics, and where no book, teaching or religion can claim to possess the whole of truth.

We can see from this that the document aims, not only to undermine the Scriptural validity of God's promises to the Jews, but to reduce Christianity itself to the level of other world religions. Perhaps Christianity has 'more' of the truth, but other religions have their respective portions and must be accorded parity of esteem. In this way, the authors are able to advance the 'consensus view' of truth and thereby deny both Christian Zionists and Jewish Zionists the right to use terms like "chosen people," Promised Land, or "God of Israel."

Since the term "God of Israel" is used over two hundred times in Scripture, we can only assume that the Presbyterian Church would like to see yet another new translation of the Bible, where this and other equally undesirable terms are omitted or 'sanitized'. Given that they want to "move interfaith dialogue to ever deeper levels" [p.30], this is almost certainly on the agenda, both to disarm the Zionists theologically and to pave the way for a globally standardized, all-inclusive form of new age 'Christianity.'

""Its [i.e. Zionism's] inspiration has been drawn not from the profound thoughts of the Hebrew Scriptures, but from those portions that betray a narrow and exclusive concept of a tribal god."" [quote by Naim Ateek] [p.33]

The document quotes with approval the Antisemitic Anglican canon, Naim Ateek. Though nominally a Christian, Ateek here makes the infamous Marcionite distinction between the so-called 'tribal' god of the Old Testament and the true God of the New Testament. The Gnostic heretic Marcion denied the scriptural validity of the Old Testament and dismissed the LORD God of the Pentateuch, Joshua and Judges as a vindictive tribal god. This is a tactic much favored by the enemies of Israel and Christian Zionism. With one stroke it allows them to erase the Biblical history of the children of Israel and to portray Jewish Zionists as a backward-looking, tribal society unfit for life in today's "interconnected, pluralistic world" [p.9].

How is it possible, you may ask, for both the Anglican and the Presbyterian churches to treat the Word of God with so little respect? If this question could be answered satisfactorily, then perhaps the bizarre mentality and emotional intensity of Anti-semitism would be easier to understand.

The document, *Zionism Unsettled*, is being recommended as a 'congregational study guide' for use by millions of Presbyterians, Anglicans, Episcopalians, and members of other professing Christian churches – all of which claim to believe and uphold the Word of God – and yet it is dedicated to one solitary purpose, the deconstruction of Israel. Along the way it denounces all who support Israel, whether Christian or Jew; rejects or ignores any documented historical fact that might confirm the legitimacy of Israel; denies the Israelis the right to defend their own territory by force; and rejects the veracity of the Biblical account of their history and prophetic destiny. And yet we are asked to believe that this is a *Christian* document!

The Presbyterian Church contends, for example, that the Bible contains "texts that liberate" and "texts that oppress," where the latter "espouse triumphalism, xenophobia, and the extermination of indigenous peoples..." [p.34] In short, it too is comfortable with the Marcionite view, at least insofar as it advances the so-called Palestinian agenda by eliminating "texts that oppress." Incredibly, the document even suggests that we should read the Biblical account of the conquest of Canaan through the eyes of the Canaanites and acknowledge that "the God of the Israelites appears to sanction ethnic cleansing, war crimes, and crimes against humanity." [p.35]

It ought to be apparent to even the least attentive reader that this document is not just deeply Antisemitic, but also deeply **heretical**. It rejects anything in the Bible that conflicts with its political agenda, even if this means accusing the LORD of "war crimes, and crimes against humanity." As the document cynically remarks, "History is, as they say, written by the victors."

However, history is also written in the earth – where it is much harder to manipulate – see the photos overleaf. They depict sulphur remnants found near the Dead Sea, similar to those which fell in a great burning torrent on the cities of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim. As a result of their persistent wickedness, the LORD utterly destroyed these cities and their inhabitants – tens of thousands of men, women and children – in a single day. The pure sulphur globules that can still be found in the region are doubtless a relic of this catastrophic event.

According to Ateek and the Anti-Zionists, the LORD seemingly had no right to execute this summary judgment on Sodom and the other cities. Just like their brothers and sisters in the New Age movement, they believe their god is a god of love who would never commit such a "crime against humanity."

Yes, the God of Israel *is* a God of love, but divine love will tolerate persistent wickedness for only so long. The Marcionite heresy is popular today because it allows men to believe they will never be held personally accountable before God for their actions. Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim are solemn historical reminders that this is absolutely not the case!




The rejection of Bible prophecy

"Instead of engaging in the work of building society as part of heeding Christ's call to share the Gospel, this pessimistic worldview encourages Christians to set themselves apart from society to prepare for judgment day." [p.45]

This section of the document attacks the dispensational interpretation of the Bible, which holds that God is implementing His program of redemption in steps or historical phases [known as *dispensations*] and that the prophetic dimension of His revelation should be understood accordingly. Christians who take a straightforward, non-mystical, interpretation of End Time prophecy recognize that this current age will culminate, not in a manmade utopia ruled by Christians, but in a seven-year period of intense global turmoil known as the Tribulation. This will include the war of Armageddon in the land of Israel and the ultimate defeat of the Antichrist.

The Presbyterian Church rejects the literal interpretation of Bible prophecy and, in the main, conceives of a future where the whole of humanity will eventually convert to Christianity. Thus, from their perspective, Christians who accept that the Tribulation is inevitable are locked into a "pessimistic worldview" and are disconnected from the real issues facing modern society. As such they have betrayed the Gospel and are spreading a fatalism that will only harm the church.

When portrayed in this light, Christian Zionists are meant to be seen as a deluded, loony fringe who preach a false version of Christianity and who add to the problems of the world by supporting Israel.

	<p>Sulphur ball embedded in a ziggurat. The outer crust has been removed to reveal the soft sulphur inside which had not been fully consumed.</p>
	<p>Sulphur ball with a hardened, partly consumed outer crust or shell.</p>
	<p>The item on the left is a sulphur ball with a burnt shell, while the item on the right is the softer inner ball of sulphur that remains after the shell is removed.</p>

"Therefore they [Christians who oppose Zionism] engage in the work of justice and peace rather than seeking an escape from history and God's final blockbuster, the destruction of all unbelievers." [p.46]

The disparaging tone of this excerpt is fairly typical of the attitude generally to Christian Zionists throughout the document. They are depicted as narrow-minded bigots who try to hide from reality, who neglect the need to promote justice and peace, and who cling to an infantile vision of the future where all the bad guys are annihilated supernaturally. Why, these deluded people even expect a 'second coming' of Christ. The message is clear: Christian Zionism is dangerous and must be confronted.

Everyone owns Israel

"the New Testament...spiritualizes and universalizes the Old Testament land promises" [p.47]

In addition to the rejection of Bible prophecy relating to the End Time, the document rejects the continuing validity of the promises made by the LORD God of Israel to His chosen people. These promises have now been "spiritualized" and "universalized". As a result they have been "transformed and opened to all humanity" [p.47] In effect the authors are arguing that the Promised Land now belongs to all mankind and that the Israelis have no right to claim it as their own.

While the Marcionites dealt with problematic passages in the Old Testament by rejecting the Old Testament entirely, the modernists choose instead to "spiritualize" them and change their intended or natural meaning.

The document also mischaracterizes the Christian Zionist and dispensationalist position by alleging that it teaches two covenants, one for the church and one for Israel. But this is not the case. The church shares in the same covenant that God made with Israel, with the key distinction that the church is not a nation and thus cannot appropriate the land-related aspects of the covenant.

In a section headed 'What Diaspora?' the document tries to contend that, since not all Jews living outside Israel want to relocate to Israel, the concept of a Jewish Diaspora is no longer meaningful. But this is a specious argument. Not all Irish people live in Ireland, nor choose to, but that does not diminish in any way the integrity of Ireland as an independent sovereign state under international law. Neither does it preclude the use of the term *Irish diaspora* to refer to the millions of Irish people living outside Ireland.

In mocking the validity of the Jewish Diaspora, the document is also contradicting the Bible which in numerous places refers to the scattering of the Jews to the four corners of the globe and to their subsequent return to Israel. Scripture also states that, once restored to the land, they will never again be uprooted:

**"And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall
no more be pulled up out of their land which I
have given them, saith the LORD thy God."
(Amos 9:15)**

Islamic attitudes to the Jews and Israel

In a document that manages to pack multiple fallacies or inaccuracies into nearly every page, section 8, '*A Palestinian Muslim Experience with Zionism*', may well be in a league of its own.

In the age-old tradition of *Taqiyya*, which exhorts Muslims to deceive their enemies in the cause of Islam – even if this means denying the facts of history or inventing new ones – the section makes outrageous claims. It alleges, for instance, that the Israelis "slaughtered untold numbers of Palestinian men, women, and children" [p.49] during the so-called *Nakba* of 1947-1948. This charge is so egregious that it is impossible to understand how the Presbyterian Church could see fit to include it in a document that purports to offer a truthful Christian perspective on the Arab-Israeli conflict.

It then goes on to contrast what it describes as the "inclusive theology of the *Qur'an*" with the "exclusive theology of Zionism." For example, it states:

"The *Qur'an* insists that Muslims demonstrate God's special respect for Jews and Christians because God is revealed in all three Abrahamic faiths." [p.50]

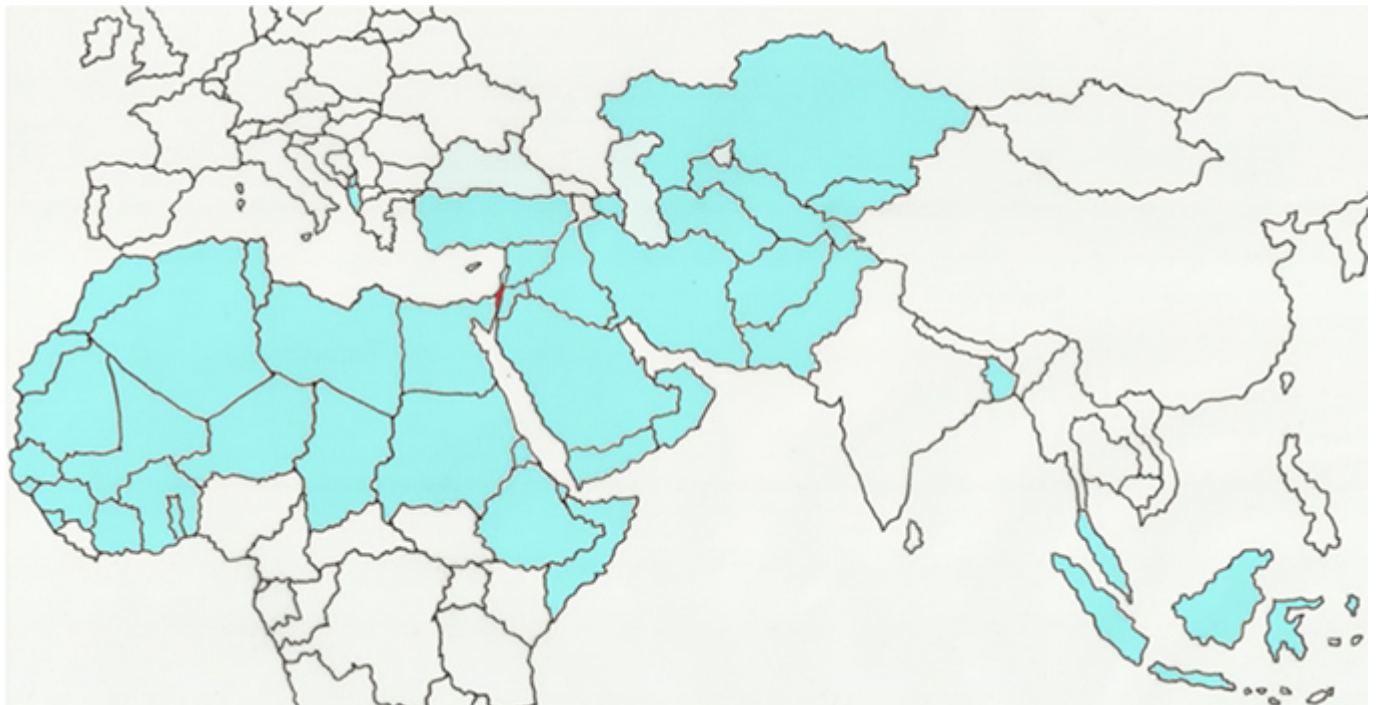
Here we have *Taqiyya* on roller-skates, where brazen falsehoods are presented as well-known truths. The Koran and Sunna actually say the **opposite** of what the document claims, demanding that Jews and Christians be compelled to submit to one of the following: (a) lifelong social subjection as a Dhimmi, with the oppression, abuse, and economic exploitation that this entails; (b) compulsory conversion to Islam; (c) permanent exile, with the expropriation of personal property; or (d) summary execution. The Presbyterian Church tries to pass this off as "special respect for Jews and Christians."

The extract also speaks of *Abrahamic faiths*. There is only one Abrahamic faith and that is Judeo-Christianity. Islam is not Abrahamic and has no connection whatever with either Judaism or Christianity. Rather, it is an attempt to absorb and destroy both by commandeering their history, their Scriptures, and their prophets, and, via forced conversion, compelling Jews and Christians to bow the knee to Baal. The 'god' of the Koran hates the LORD God of Israel and condemns belief in the deity of Jesus as *shirk*, the greatest blasphemy of all.

The section also ignores another deceitful aspect of Koranic hermeneutics known as Abrogation. This nullifies earlier, less oppressive verses of the Koran by giving priority to those written in the latter part of Muhammad's life. Since these later verses (which are scattered throughout the Koran) express an appalling intolerance towards Jews and Christians, they underpin the radical Islamic attitude to other religions.

Not only does Islam want to appropriate the history, Scripture, and prophets of the Jews, but it also wants to take their land and their holy city, Jerusalem.

The World of Islam



As you can see, the Islamic world is enormous compared to Israel (shown in **red**). So why do 1,570 million Muslims want to destroy a tiny population of 5 million Jews? Why do Muslims, with 10,830,000 square miles of land, covet the tiny parcel of land called Israel – a mere 10,800 square miles (one thousandth that of Islam)? Why can't the Muslim world, with its incredibly vast territory, find a home for four million Arab refugees? Why do so many Muslim countries continue to oppress and persecute thousands of peace-loving Christians within their borders? Please take the time to reflect on these deeply disturbing questions and find Christ-honoring answers.

A deeply unpalatable fact

In a section titled 'A Palestinian Christian Postscript', written by Anglican priest Naim Ateek, it is alleged that Christian Zionists support Israel in part because they believe that a general conflagration in the Middle East would hasten the apocalyptic "End Times" and "the return of Christ." It also alleges that Christian Zionists support Israel because of "price tag" theology, whereby the legitimization of Israel is the price that Christians feel they must pay in order to expunge the guilt they experience from their cruel treatment of the Jews throughout history.

Once again we see a cynical mischaracterization of the Christian Zionist position. While these factors may apply to a trivial extent, the basic and fundamental reason that Christians support Israel is because it is Biblical to do so. This is a deeply unpalatable fact that critics like Ateek cannot accept.

The LORD God loves Jerusalem and has set it aside for His Son whom, at a time of His own choosing, He will send to rule in person over the saved remnant of Israel. Satan hates this prospect – since it will crown the work of Calvary – and will continue to resist it to the very end by every means possible.

Ateek also attacks what he calls "the erroneous claim that all Jews are racial descendants of the Israelites of biblical times" [p.57]. This bitter accusation is being used with increasing frequency to undermine the Jewish claim to the land of Israel. If Replacement Theology doesn't work ("you did not inherit the promises because they now belong to the church"), then another version of the same technique is used ("you did not inherit the promises because you are not really Jewish").

The vast majority of people in Israel who claim to be Jewish are undoubtedly Jewish, and, as Jews, they are Jewish in the full Biblical sense. While the Bible speaks of "the synagogue of Satan, "who say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie" (Revelation 3:9) it is referring to a subversive cohort within the worldwide community of Jews who share Satan's hatred of the Jews. Several Bible prophecies make it quite clear that the nation that returns to the land of Israel from the four corners of the world – to which they have been scattered in judgment – will be the nation to which the prophecies and promises refer.

Ateek then makes a statement that has chilling implications:

"The casual reader may miss the severity of these charges. It is the equivalent of declaring Zionism heretical, a doctrine that fosters both political and theological injustice. This is the strongest condemnation that a Christian confession can make against any doctrine that promotes death rather than life." [p.57]

The hostility embedded in these words is clearly shared by the leaders of the Presbyterian Church. Christian Zionists are heretics, they claim, and rightfully deserve "the strongest condemnation."

Please pause and think about this for a moment. Up to this point, using a series of phony arguments and twisted history, the document has condemned Christian Zionism as a heresy and demanded that Christian Zionists be "held accountable." It now goes a step further and classifies this newly minted heresy as the most dangerous brand of false teaching, namely a "doctrine that promotes death rather than life."

Since the odium of heresy must at some stage result in formal censure and salutary punishment, we can expect the Presbyterian Church to take whatever steps are necessary to deal with this problem. Indeed, Ateek suggests that "the punishment of exclusion is warranted" [p.58].

Given the stridency of this document and the willingness of the Presbyterian Church to use it as a teaching aid, Christian Zionists will likely be purged from the liberal protestant churches in the near future and condemned as a sect.

The Presbyterian Church is already supporting the coercive campaign known as BDS – boycott, divestment, sanctions – to punish Israel. This involves the boycott of goods originating in Israel, divestment from companies linked to Israel, and the imposition of sanctions that would inhibit trade in Israeli goods. It would require only a minor adjustment to extend this campaign to businesses owned by, or employing, known Christian Zionists.

The Presbyterian Church (USA)

While the document itself is truly malicious, an extraordinary compendium of Antisemitic garbage, our real concern is the degree to which a so-called Christian church is willing to bear witness to its contents and even to recommend its use as a *congregational study guide*. The Presbyterian church has turned its back on true Christianity. In doing so it has not only twisted the Word of God in countless ways in order to pursue a nasty political agenda, but it has strayed several times into positions that are plainly heretical.

If there are any genuine Christians among the membership of the Presbyterian Church (USA), they ought to be deeply concerned at what their leaders are doing in their name. The LORD will hold each and every one of us accountable for our conduct in this matter.

What future can there be for a Church that blasphemes the LORD? The Presbyterian Church (USA) stands with Naim Ateek when he accuses the God of Israel of "war crimes" against the tribes of Canaan. Are Christians blind to the wickedness at work here? Have they drifted so far from God's Holy Word that they can tolerate such flagrant apostasy in their midst?

As the Bible warns, rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and yet we have today an ever-growing number of professing Christians who are indifferent to witchcraft or who hardly understand that such a thing exists.

CONCLUSION

Israel lives daily under a death sentence imposed by the Jew-hating forces of Islam. No other country on earth is faced with this kind of threat. Her enemies have already tried on several occasions to wipe her off the map and are continuing to amass the resources and matériel needed to achieve their aim. They have shown again and again a clear willingness to sacrifice thousands, if not millions, of their own people in order to annihilate Israel. The unfortunate 'Palestinians' have been selected by the highest leaders of Islam as an expendable commodity, a 'human shield' in this escalating conflict. For them, if a thousand innocent Arabs have to be sacrificed in order to kill ten Israelis, then that is a price worth paying.

The Israelis are only human, with the same faults and failings as the rest of humanity. We can pray for the peace of Jerusalem – as the Word of God directs (Psalm 122) – without necessarily condoning everything they do in their own defense.

We must remember also that the turmoil we have seen to date is only a tiny fraction of what is yet to come. A great many Jews will die in this final phase of God's terrible judgment on His chosen people. And yet, through His immeasurable grace and His everlasting mercy, the righteous remnant will survive and Israel will triumph over her adversaries.

The seven years of the Tribulation will be unlike anything mankind has ever known. The nations of the earth, seemingly with few exceptions, will unite in their condemnation of Israel and conspire to destroy her. This may very well come about on foot of drastic action by Israel herself to forestall a threatened Arab invasion.

The nations that seek the destruction of Israel and her people will be required by the LORD to drink deeply from the same cup that they compelled the children of Israel to drink for 2,000 years. The pain and suffering that the Jews had to endure over all that time will be compressed into a mere seven years and given back to the nations, every one of which will be destroyed:

**"Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the LORD:
for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the
nations whither I have driven thee: but I will not make
a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will
I not leave thee wholly unpunished."
(Jeremiah 46:28)**

In the course of these cataclysmic, End Time events the LORD God of Israel will vindicate His Holy Name before the nations of the world:

**"Thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles...for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children. And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine: and all flesh shall know that I the LORD am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob."
(Isaiah 49:22-26)**

Yes, His chosen people will suffer, but they will emerge victorious. Perhaps in due course they may even see these events as God sees them, a "small moment" in the eternity that lies before them:

**"For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.
(Isaiah 54:7-8)**

The population of Israel will increase enormously during the Millennium, thereby fulfilling a long-overlooked prophecy of Moses:

**"The LORD God of your fathers make you a thousand times so many more as ye are, and bless you, as he hath promised you!"
(Deuteronomy 1:11)**

Given that the total number of Israelites at the time of this prophecy was close to two million, we can expect the world population of Jews toward the end of the Millennium to reach two billion or more.

Jeremiah's field

We will end with the humble story of Jeremiah's field. When the great prophet was held in abject captivity by the apostate king Zedekiah, he asked a close relative to arrange for the legal purchase by him of a field in his home town of Anathoth. The lad came to his prison cell with the necessary legal deed of transfer. Jeremiah signed the deed in the presence of witnesses and paid seventeen pieces of silver for a field that he himself would never enjoy. Having foretold for several decades the destruction of Jerusalem unless the nation returned again to God, he was now leaving a witness to his people – under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit – that despite the calamity that was about to befall Judea, the Jews would one day return to their own land. Jeremiah was confident that his descendants would in due course inherit and enjoy the field that he had just bought.

Today, through their visible support for Israel in Bible prophecy, born-again Christians are a living witness to the Jews – just like the deed to Jeremiah's field – that God keeps His promises, that He is a covenant-keeping God, and that He will do everything that He said He will do, to the last detail.

Our God, the God of Israel, is the Almighty and Everlasting God!

Praise His Holy Name!

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For further information visit www.zephaniah.eu

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